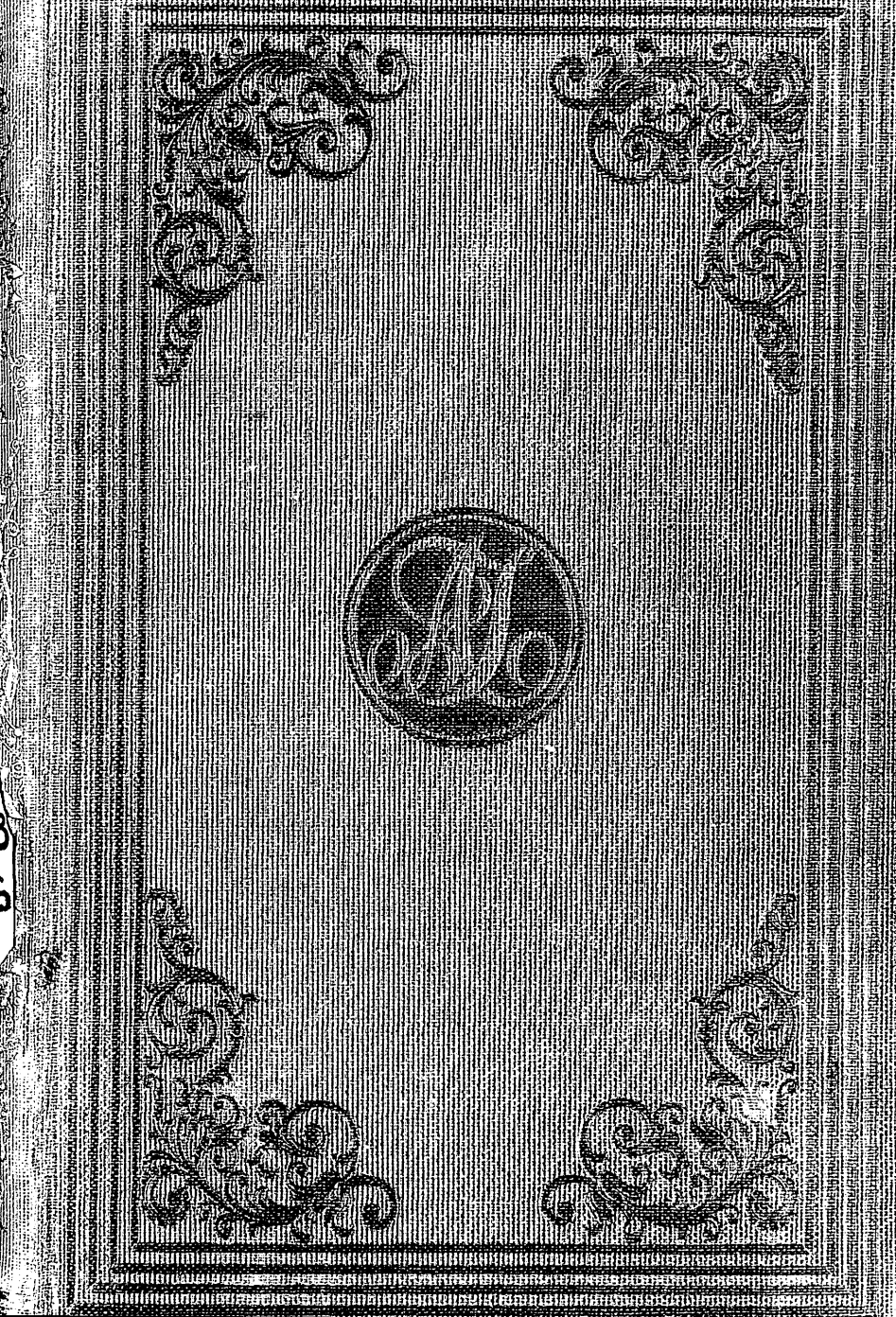
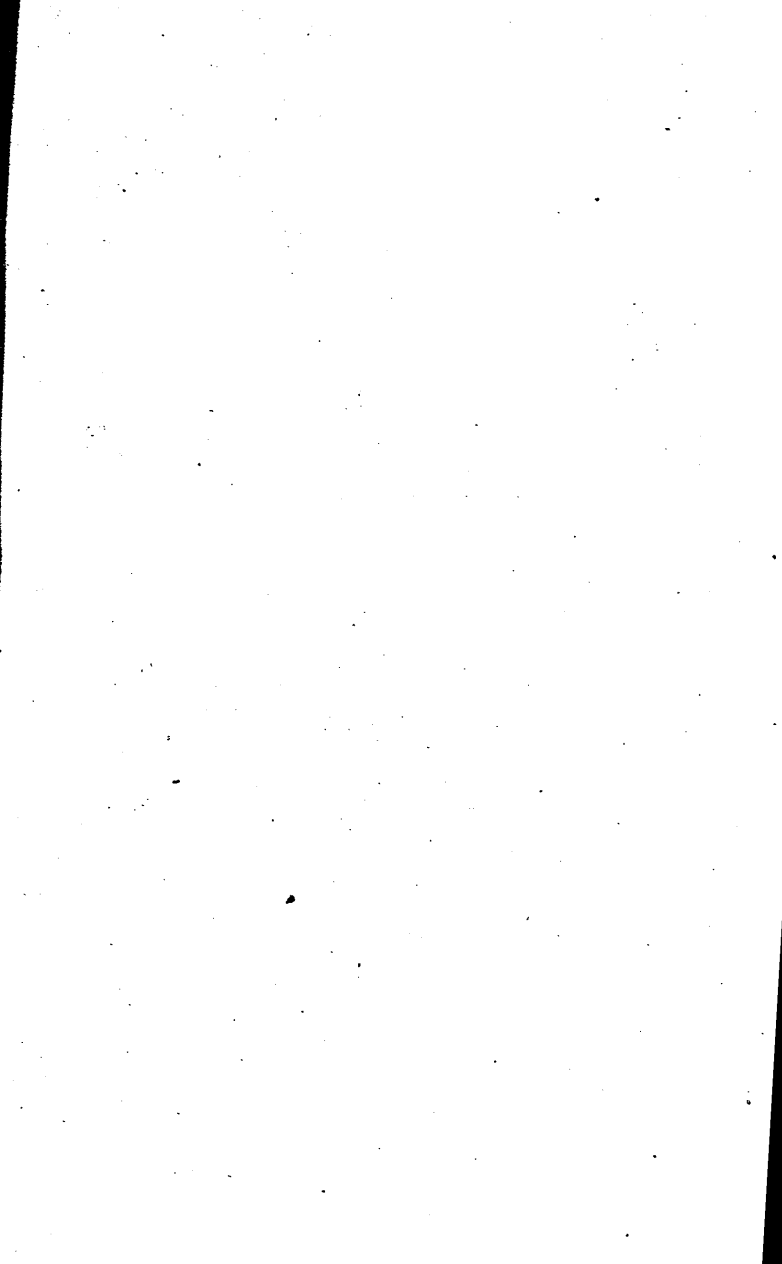




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DISCOURSES,

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS

BY

Edwin Russell
E. H. CHAPIN.

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TO

THE INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN SOCIETY,
RICHMOND, VA.,

AND TO

THE FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY,
CHARLESTOWN, MASS.,

These Discourses are affectionately
DEDICATED,

BY THEIR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

THE great end of preaching is to reform the life—to reconcile men to duty and to God. In order to accomplish this the most effectually, it is granted that men should have correct views of the doctrines of Christianity—that they should understand the true motives and objects of religion. But when the preacher has presented his best ideas of these—when he has thoroughly convinced the reason; he has only just entered upon his work; he has only removed the barriers to its successful issue. In that great field the human heart, lies his chief labor.

The circumstances of the denomination of Christians with which the author is connected, have required, and in many places still do require, a detailed and frequent exhibition of their views of the doctrines of our religion. Hence its preachers have very generally occupied an antagonist attitude, and most of its publications present a controversial tone. This, we repeat, circumstances have and still do require. But if we have not neglected, we cannot too zealously act upon the truth stated above—that the heart must be cultivated as well as the intellect—that practical religion should be aimed at as the true life and conservation of the members of our communion—of all sects—of the world. The great principle to be propagated and established in the souls of all men, is not this or that particular “*ism*,” but the spirit of Christ. Without this, no denomination can be right—no society can flourish—no soul can truly live.

Acting upon this idea, the writer respectfully presents to the public the following Discourses, chiefly of a practical character. While he loves to unfold and exhibit those great truths which may be a bond of union for all denominations of Christians, he has made no effort to conceal his opinions, or to go between the discordant tenets of the sects. Neither has he travelled out of his course, in order to thrust prominently forward his peculiar views. However feeble his labors, he would be limited within no set bounds—but search for truth wherever it may lie. However devoted to a particular denomination, he would speak to the great heart of humanity, for he trusts that his own pulses sympathize with it—he would speak for God; for the preacher is God's servant, not man's—and he should never suffer any man or class of men to put a seal upon his lips. He is not particularly anxious, therefore, whether those who shall read this little volume are dissatisfied because he has presented so much of his peculiar opinions—or because he has set them forth so meagrely. If the *principles* he has laid down are good—if souls are made better by them—if Christ's kingdom is strengthened and God's glory enhanced, this will be a reward for his humble labors that human censure cannot deprive him of, or human praise bestow.

These Discourses, then, are chiefly practical. The author does not look for a wide circulation of them out of the denomination with which he is connected. He trusts, however, that wherever they go they may do good. Their literary merits he leaves to those who may deem it worth while to undertake the task of criticism.

Invoking upon these, and all his labors, the blessing of God, and his accompanying grace, he commits this volume to the public

CHARLESTOWN, MASS., April, 1841.

DISCOURSES.

DISCOURSE I.

HUMILITY AND HOPE.

1 Cor. xiii. 12.—For now we see through a glass darkly.

Two principles it is commendable for man to cherish—*Humility* and *Hope*. These, operating together, should chasten and guide each other, so that the former will not sink our opinion of ourselves or our fellows too low, so that the latter will not intoxicate us with unbecoming pride, or dazzle and blind us to the obstacles that lie in our way. To excite a due improvement of the quality of humility, not unmingled with the throbings and aspirations of hope, should be the frequent and earnest aim of the teacher of his fellowmen. The complex character of human nature—the proposition that it is composed of mingled good and evil—we deem an axiom of strict, philosophical soundness. We are not wholly lost and hopeless, we have powers of vision, we

do perceive objects and feel their beauty, although “we see through a glass darkly.” We cannot look upon human nature in a position so degraded and melancholy, as to believe that it is removed from all good—that it has no light, no excellence. There are deep emotions in our own hearts—there are beautiful manifestations that break out here and there—that evince that man is not wholly lost, that his imperfections are not so absorbing and vital as to make out a total derangement of his moral system, a radical aversion to and incapacity for good. There are bright gleamings, there are sweet voices, there are eloquent appeals, gushing forth from nature and from Revelation, that speak not to stones and torpid matter, and things that hear not and heed not—but that address a conscious and willing sympathy in the hearts of men.

Neither, on the other hand, are we perfect. Sin is upon us and interwoven with our life. Our faculties are blended with our propensities, our lofty aspirations with low and grovelling desires, our truth with error, our light with darkness. How many of the best, the farthest onward in the path of righteousness—nay, those who have seemed to catch already the ardent breathings of the seraphim, and the power of celestial insight upon spiritual things; how many like these have

felt with the great apostle—"I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?" How many by humiliating experience can bear testimony to the errors, the imperfections, the sins that throng around and entangle us, that weave themselves into the very meshes of our souls !—"For now we see through a glass darkly."

This idea of the condition of man, then, it appears to us, should be constantly kept in view. The doctrine of total depravity on the one hand, and of human perfection on the other, afford but little if any incentive to moral action. It is where there is evil to be eradicated and good to be secured, and where there is a capacity to this end, that hope exists, that humility operates.

With this view, I would make the text the foundation of the remarks that may follow. I would feel, and I would have it felt, that I am speaking to those who have cause both to be humble and to hope in their present condition—who are children of human nature, of the earth, earthy ; and yet, who were made a little lower than the angels, into whose nostrils God breathed the breath of life until they became living souls and to whom the Gospel has been given.

I. "For now we see through a glass darkly." How limited, in fact, is human knowledge, how narrow its range, how quickly we arrive at its bounds. Newton, as his mighty intellect mounted above the common wisdom of men and went out and stood humbled and awed by the vastness of the field that lay before him, and confounded by the truths that burst in their magnificent and awful splendor upon his vision, felt "that he was gathering pebbles on the shore of an infinite ocean." And it is ever so with those whose minds are the most expanded by thought and filled with the treasures of wisdom. It is the narrow, or at least the inexperienced intellect, that feels as if it knew *all*—as if there were not one key-note in this vast organ of the universe but its ear has heard it—not one shred of gold in all this complicate and woven fabric of things but its eye has seen it—not one idea, one plan, in the great economy of the whole but it has entered into its heart to conceive it.

We sit us down to study awhile. We gather around us books and parchments. We brush away the rubbish from the fountains of antiquity. We wait until "the marble lips" of the past,

"Fit organs of eternity,"

shall move and speak. We reason and specu-

late, we dream and make theories, we read and reflect—and then, say we, “our education is completed.” But the first step we take into this open field of nature, the fossil in its crumbling bed, the atom, the spark, reveals our ignorance and rebukes our vanity. “We reason from what we know”—but ah! what *do* we know? When we have taken that fragment of inanimate block, or earth, or stone, and analyzed its compounds and talked of its properties, what have we learned? “Here,” we say, “are its elements,”—but what are the elements of these elements? How came they into such curious juxtaposition, and in such a shape? How did they grow all secretly and still, without a voice, without a rational life, into such or such a matter? You talk of its elements, you speak of its properties, and yet can you make one atom like it? Do you know the materials and the processes of its birth? Do you know all the part it plays—the precise connection it has with the universal whole? Why should the carbon in its hidden laboratory produce both the coarse fuel and the precious gem—the charcoal and the diamond? Why should the tiny bar of steel, in the darkest night, upon the wildest sea, when the heavens are black above and the waves are mad beneath, still tremblingly point to the north? Whence come the meteor shapes that

shoot in flickering, ever-varying beauty, and weave and shimmer across the polar sky? What mystery is there among the stars, that they go away from us for a season, and come again, in their time, with their bright visitings? What are the bands of Orion? Where is the lost Pleiad? Can you tell, moreover, all the phenomena of this curious *thought*, that flies swifter than electric flashes to the bounds of the universe?—that quivers in the countenance of the little child, and yet moves him to wait for manifestations of God—that gushes out in love and tenderness, from the well-springs of a mother's heart, and yet nerves the martyr to hold his hand unblenchingly in the flame? Have you scanned all the elements of mind? Do you know all the modes of its existence—the connections that it has with other beings—the nature of all the destinies it shall accomplish? No!—you *know* none of these things. And yet, your wisdom would make a theory so solid, so compact, so dogmatic, that not another idea shall find place there—not a jot shall be moved, not a tittle reversed. You speak as if you knew all—you decide as if demonstration were written on all existences and your eyes had seen them—when, in truth, your vision is limited, (oh! how small;) you stand upon a little fragment of the universe, and “see through a

glass darkly." "System of nature!" says a quaint though eloquent writer; "to the wisest, wide as is his vision, nature remains of quite *infinite* depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and measured square miles. To the minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident of his little native creek, may have become familiar; but does the minnow understand the ocean-tides and periodic currents, the trade-winds, and monsoons, and moon's eclipses; by all which the condition of its little creek is regulated, and may from time to time, (*unmiraculously* enough,) be quite overset and reversed? Such a minnow is man; his creek, this planet earth; his ocean, the immeasurable All; his monsoons and currents, the mysterious course of Providence through *Æons* of *Æons*."

And how with a voice of authority speaks the sublime language of Inspiration, showing man the narrowness of his wisdom and rebuking his arrogant pride of intellect. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof: When the morning-stars sang

together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare, if thou knowest it all. Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof, That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof? Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great? Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow, or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war? By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth? Who hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters; or a way for the lightning of thunder; To cause it to rain on the earth, where no rain is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man: To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth? Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?"

My hearers, a little thought, a little circumspection, teaches us how limited and imperfect is our knowledge, whether it relate to intellectual or to spiritual matters. There is weakness to overcome us, there are errors to darken, there is the veil of the material, the temporal and the seen, to shut out the spiritual, the immortal and the invisible. "For now we see through a glass darkly."

Do not apprehend me as underrating the capacities of human nature—as making them feeble and of little moment. I have been speaking *comparatively*. I have placed that which man *does* know in contrast with that which he *does not*, and it is only *then* that these capacities appear small and weak. Viewed abstractly—viewed in relation to itself from age to age—as progressing from infancy to manhood, from benighted centuries to an era of light and excellence and power; mind is a mighty, a glorious principle. And glorious, too, is the sphere in which it has been placed, and the things of which it may take

cognizance. Yes, glorious is this vast theatre in which we stand and read lessons of unfailing wisdom, written over all the heavens in letters of light, emblazoned on the mountain summits, stamped on the green earth, and thrown athwart the everlasting sea. Full, full to overflowing is this beautiful world with instruction. Its very clouds are almost the magnificent curtains of seraphim, and out from the infinite depths above and around it there gushes perpetually celestial music. And all this is for the human soul—of all this may it take cognizance—of all this it has learned; and therefore, we say, mighty and glorious is it. But let not man become arrogant in his wisdom; let him not talk of “the sure laws of nature,” and “the revealed mysteries of things,” and upon these frame dogmas and theories and philosophies, when he sees as he looks abroad, when he feels as he advances in knowledge, that he is backward, and ignorant, and limited. Let him, in brief, learn *Humility*;—“For now we see through a glass darkly.”

And yet, my hearers, with this humility, *Hope* is born. What says the text? “For *now* we see through a glass darkly.” “*Now!*” Then we may know more hereafter?—light may yet break upon our shadowed vision? Does it not imply so? Were this portion of the verse unconnected, did

it stand alone, (and as a clause by itself we are now considering it,) would it not imply so? Wherefore do we see at all, if we are ever only to catch glimpses of things? Why are powers of vision given to the soul, if they are only for partial sight? But "we see through a glass *darkly*." True, but we *see*. Shall we always behold doubtingly and dimly? Does it say *always*?—that we *always* shall thus be limited and powerless and ignorant? No; it says "*now* we see through a glass darkly." But let these fleshy bars be laid aside, let these earthly scales fall from our eyes, let the wider field of immortality spread beneath our spirit-feet, let the soul go up to its *second* stage of progress, and shall we not know more, far more? Shall we not go among the stars, and learn the way of their courses, and hear, far on and far up, the music that peals out from them; and tread the archways of the immense, and drink in more and more of the infinite? So *Hope* is born with *Humility*, in this matter.

II. But "now we see through a glass darkly." I remark, in the second place—How unstable and shifting are human theories!—how fallible are our opinions! The wisdom of one age, what is it to another? Foolishness! The philosophy of to-day, over which grave sages sit with venerable

air, and which they proclaim with eloquent zeal, is beheld, to-morrow, as the exploded vagary of the enthusiast or the sceptic, and is despised and laughed at. The olden wisdom, the systems of dreamers in the ancient time, where are they now? Wrecked, shattered, sunken! Gone down into the depths of change and time, through whose flood some venturous diver now and then plunges, bringing up their fragments to prop *his* crazy theory, or to prove his lore by giving to the world some curious specimen of antiquity. And yet, these were glorious dreams in their day; wrought out and spun with threads of gold and gorgeous tissues from many a busy brain; yea, perchance, containing among their despised and moth-eaten superstitions portions of rare nobility and wondrous beauty, that shame the coarseness and littleness of many a modern sage. So passed the wisdom of Zoroaster and Hermes, of Pythagoras and Plato. And so pass the theories and systems of the present. Built up by one school and battered down by another—sect striving with sect, and party with party—even the reformer interweaving his materials and basing his fabric upon the broken errors of the reformed. Oh! “we see through a glass darkly.”

How imperfect, too, are all our best efforts! something still beyond, more beautiful, but

shadowy, that we cannot grasp—something that we still want, but cannot find ;—more grace in our conception than we can chisel upon the marble—a deeper inspiration in our spirit than we can breathe in our song—a mightier idea in our thought than we can utter in words. Who has not felt this ?

And, then, in our spiritual endeavors—knowing and still resisting—repenting and still sinning ; pressing up until we can almost hear angel music, and then wallowing in the filth and debasement of earth ; attending Jesus in his teachings and his miracles, and denying him at his trial and his cross ; sitting at his feet, and then going out to follow and obey sin. Living in this way, is our spiritual vision clear ? Do we not “see through a glass darkly ?” We have not an unshadowed view of the loveliness of religion ; we do not look fully upon the face of the Redeemer ; we do not see the end of the goal, the mark upon which is the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Else, why this sinning, this lulling to sleep in the arms of guilt, this entanglement in the meshes of temptation, this indolence and drowsiness and insensibility ; when God is inviting, and Jesus bleeds and prays for us upon the cross, and Moses and Paul, and reason and conscience, all, all appeal

to us to awake and act? My friends, "we see through a glass darkly." These shifting theories, these errors and doubts, these frailties and sins, should teach us deep, sincere, lowly *Humility*.

But again, *Hope* is born also. Imperfect as our works are, have we not an idea of perfection? Unfinished as our productions are when we leave this world, are the tools broken at the grave? or are they, when we reach its portals, as it were but just prepared for use, cunning in their skill and polished by much labor unto keenness? Yes, *Hope* springs up, and the idea of *Immortality* is born amid these crude works, these unfinished fragments, these imperfections and errors that lie around us. From these embers is kindled an undying flame—the voice of a celestial oracle issues from the crumbling shrine of mortality.

Where lies the imperfection—in the *capacity* of the executor, or in the *execution* of the work? in the *idea*, or in the *expression*? in the *thought*, or in the *word*? Plainly in the latter, while the executor, the capacity, the idea, are unexhausted and unsatisfied. And shall it *always* be so? Do we possess capacities which shall never complete their work? Have we *ideas* of unearthly beauty and of an immortal life, when the *reality* con-

finer us entirely and only to this sphere? Have we faculties for a work greater than we find at our hands, have we powers that fit us for eternal progress, and are these faculties, these powers, abortive? Why have they been given us? To mock our hopes? To excite aspirations that never shall be answered? Is it so, is it so, that when our powers are the fullest developed—when they have toiled and toiled, and are just enabled to reap the fruits of their toil—is it so, that they are then crushed and broken forever? The strings of the lyre snapped asunder, when they have just been tuned to cunning melody and are uttering their sweetest music? No! there is an immortality for man. These chippings and parings, these imperfect statues, these half-formed monuments, are the attempts of the pupil, fitted, by laboring upon them, to go into a wider and more perfect field and work out his mastery. “When,” says the gifted, but erring and misguided Shelley, “you can discern where the fresh colors of the faded flower abide, or the music of the broken lyre, seek life among the dead.” But the poorest peasant, upon whose tomb-stone is inscribed “*He sleeps in Jesus,*” refutes him. *He* refutes him, who drew up the coarse covering of his bed, and clasped his toil-worn hands and murmured a dying prayer; for that inscription is the expres-

sion of a universal hope that in him has found its fruition—that prayer was the aspiration of a deathless spirit that has gone to find its answer.

Oh yes ! we do “see through a glass darkly ;” but still we *see*. Shadows fall athwart our vision, clouds part and thicken, when we seek to look across that stream of death—but still we catch glimpses of something beyond. Were we stone-blind, were it *total* obscuration, the sceptic’s argument might suffice. But darkly as we see through this glass, we *see* ! So *Hope* again is born with *Humility*.

III. But “now we see through a glass darkly.” I remark, once more, that, when we find how little we really know of the economy of the universe, and of the designs of the Creator, we should learn *Humility*. Do we not often conduct as if we knew and saw all these designs—the result as well as the process, the whole as well as a part ? I have heard in a city, when the still night brooded over it, and the lights were gone from the windows, and the tumult from the streets, one watchman crying to another—“All is well !” And all *was* well to his eye. All was well in these still streets, upon those glittering domes and sloping roofs that were spread around him. But, oh ! *beneath*, shut in and hidden

from him, how many hearts were aching, how many sick heads throbbed upon their pillows, how many tears were flowing because of separations that would take place at morning—how many agonies, how many griefs, how many fears were stirring but a little way from him, on his right hand and his left! And was *all* well then? If it were so in that one city, was it so everywhere, through all the cities, and hamlets, and homes of the land—of the vast, wide world? But still he proclaimed all well. *His* all was well; all that *he* saw, all of which *he* took cognizance—but that was not the whole city, the country, the world. So apt are men to make that which is immediately around them, *the* all.

But now, had fire broken out in one of these dwellings, how would the inhabitants have leaped from their beds with screams and wild affright; and as they saw their home crashing down in ruin, as they saw their property shrivelling in the flame, as they beheld nothing before them but the cold charities of a cold world—poverty, destitution, beggary; to *them* it was all *ill*; *their* world was darkened—they saw no light or beauty; and yet the heavens were as sweet and fair, the stars looked down as brightly, and the morning sunshine would linger around those ashes as pleasantly, and would wake up joy and

hope and laughter from their slumbers, as ever before. *Their* all was dark—the universal *all* was bright and glad. Is there nought like this that occurs every day in the world? Do not men, beholding in the narrow limit of their vision good or evil, say “*all* is good”—“*all* is bad”? And yet, how little of *the* all—of the universe—of the working of this great economy of things—of its objects and results—how little do they know! Conscious, then, of this ignorance, let us cherish *Humility*.

But again is *Hope* born with *Humility*. We see but a little part of the works of Deity, but still we do *see*, and in the intention of all that meets our vision *Goodness* is manifested; evil comes in only when, at first, to our narrow idea of things, that intention appears frustrated. But from frequent experience we know that this is not a defeat, but only one place in which good is manifested, or, at least, one trial through which virtue is strengthened and made better. If, then, all we see and experience bears the stamp of Infinite Goodness, and even that which is evil comes in as an accident rather than an original design, and often, in the narrow limit of our vision, is overruled for good and works to that end, we may safely infer that that which we do *not* see or experience is the economy of the same Infinite

Goodness, and that the evil that in this sphere is *not* overruled for good, will ultimately, when our perceptions are enlarged, be swallowed up in the triumph of virtue and happiness. Yes, limited as is our sight, seeing "through a glass darkly," still we see enough of the working of this stupendous mechanism of things to look for the victory of Goodness over all forms of evil—for universal light and peace. From the rifts of dark clouds, a brightness glimmers out that shows us the immutable heaven above—that shows us what may be revealed when these clouds pass away. So *Hope* again springs up, amid our ignorance and doubt.

So may we reason in our individual afflictions. For the time, and as far as we can see around us, they are grievous and painful; but if we look up with a calm faith, although we may "see through a glass darkly," we shall see; and if we wait with a pious trust, by-and-by the mystery will be revealed to us, and we shall discover the fruits of good seed that was sown in the night of our sorrow and watered by our tears—we shall discover that our light affliction wrought out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Thy trial, oh Christian martyr! was grievous and cruel. Chained to the stake, clasped by the flame, derided and smitten by thy persecutors,

thy sufferings and torture were great. Yet, looking through the fire, thou didst catch "a glimpse of the martyr's heaven," and thy ashes and blood have become "the seed of the church." Thy weeping, oh grāy-haired sire! for that prodigal boy, was long and bitter. Dark was the hour to thee when he thrust aside thy love, and left thee, with thy bowed head, to mourn. Thou couldst not read the meaning of this sorrow then—thou *didst* read it when thine arms were around the penitent, when his tears mingled with thine, and the words of gratitude and reconciliation assured thee that *now* he was linked to thee by cords that the world could not sever, and his feet would wander from thee no more. Thy grief, oh mourning mother! was sad and stern. It *was* hard to part from that loved child. It *was* hard to put back the tresses from his pale brow, and kiss his quivering lips, and see him die. It *was* hard to lay him in his little grave, and place the green turf above him for the sunlight and the rain to fall upon, and then to return to hear the music of his voice no more. Oh! all this *was* hard, and in thy season of bitter agony thou didst not see *why* it was so. But when days shall glide on, and thou dost find how much of thy treasure *now* is laid up in heaven—how the need of support, the desire of consolation, has led thee

to commune with God—how the holy resignation, the peaceful hope, the upward-looking faith have taken up their abode within thy heart ; yea, when, in the consummation, thou shalt discover how great a part thy child has performed, in bringing thee home to himself and to heaven and to thy Father—when from the darkness all these revelations shall burst in light upon thee, *then* thou wilt learn the meaning of thy affliction.

Thus, then, although “we see through a glass darkly,” let us, in the darkest season, *hope*.

My friends, let the text teach us to be *Humble* and *Hopeful*. Pilgrims are we—travellers seeking a better country. Let us be *humble*. We are liable to err, frail, weak, dependent. Let us be hopeful ; we catch glimpses of the wished-for goal—we have encouragement upon our way ; unseen messengers of mercy are around us—we have a Father in Heaven. Striving to learn, let us not be proud ; convinced of our feebleness, let us not despond. Sinners, let us repent. Let us follow Christ and rejoice. Thus let us live, thus let us act, until this mortal glass through which “we see darkly” shall be broken at the grave, and we shall rise, to “see as we are seen, and to know even as we are known.”

DISCOURSE II.

TRUTH IN CONTRASTS.

JOHN viii. 23.—And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

THIS was said by our Savior to the Jews. Whitby paraphrases the passage thus: “Ye are from beneath, *and so can think and speak only of earthly things*; I am from above, *and so speak of the things above, whither I am going*; ye are of this world, *and so your thoughts, affections, words and actions, wholly respect this world*: I am not of this world, *and so my life and doctrine suits not with your temper, nor have you any right apprehensions of my saying.*”

Jesus of Nazareth stood directly opposed in his character and teachings to those whom he was addressing. The malicious and jealous principles of the Pharisee, his self-righteous acts, his narrow views, were in vivid contrast with the purity and spirituality of the Redeemer, with his universal love, his forgiving and gentle disposition, and his enlarged and glorious designs. They were from beneath; he was from above: they were of this world; he was not of this world. What was the creed of the Pharisee?—for in him

we behold the prominent opposer to the teachings and ministrations of the Savior;—what was the creed of the Pharisee—what was his general character? At the time to which our text refers, although their origin is not well known, they were the most famous and powerful sect of the Jews. They were distinguished for their strict observance of the Oral Law, as it is called, which they believed to have been delivered by an archangel to Moses, during his forty days' residence in Mount Sinai, from whom it was committed to seventy elders, who transmitted it to posterity. With the observance of this and the Written Law, they held that "a man may not only obtain justification with God, but perform meritorious works of supererogation." "Fasting, almsgiving, ablutions, and confession," according to them, "are sufficient atonements for sin." They made long and frequent prayers in public—had broad phylacteries, or rolls of parchment in which were written sentences of the law, upon their garments—were assiduous in making proselytes—ostentatious in charity; "and under all this show of zeal and piety," says a writer, "their vanity, avarice, licentiousness and impiety, called forth many severe rebukes from our Savior."

These principles were opposed to the system of Jesus. *That* enjoined a severe internal purity,

of which the outward form was but the framework and expression. It did not rest in meditation, fasting, prayer, as *ends*, but as *means* to the performance of duty and spiritual cultivation. It rebuked self-righteousness, teaching that the humble and despised publican offered a more acceptable prayer than the boasting Pharisee. And how did it rebuke inward sin and hypocrisy!—how did it rebuke the whited sepulchre, which outwardly is beautiful to view, but is within filled with dead men's bones and all uncleanness! How did it teach the principle of a universal brotherhood, a love that is world-wide, an enlarged and expanded charity and sympathy! Opposed, directly opposed, was the doctrine of the Redeemer to that of his persecutors and enemies—to that of those whom he came to teach and guide, to lead from their bondage and darkness into the ways of eternal life. His was the light that issues from pure fountains on high—that streams in living radiance from heaven; theirs were the rays that are born of earth, that burn with a dim and fitful light, and fade and leave us in darkness. Theirs was from beneath; his from above: theirs was of this world; his was not of this world.

But, to leave the particular circumstances of the text, it may not be unprofitable for us to contrast some of the principles that are in existence

in society and in the individual, with some of the principles of Christ's gospel—of his religion—and see if it may not be said in each case, by the one, in its comparison with the other—"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world."

I. In the *first* place, compare the system itself of Jesus Christ with all other religious or philosophical systems in the world. Some of these have involved depraved and debased principles; have been founded with the sword and in blood; have appealed to man's grosser passions and superstition. The system of Jesus involves the best teachings, the most perfect morality, the loftiest principles of action ever presented to the consideration of man—(this even the infidel will allow)—and it is based upon the great essentials of love to God and love to man. *Their* votaries have lifted up their darkened brows in the shadow of deep and night-like error—have bowed before altars smoking with profane sacrifices and reeking with unhallowed blood. The true disciples of Christ have worshipped, and may worship, in the broad, full light of truth, with spiritual sacrifices of love and devotion warm upon their hearts, and with holy thoughts, like angel messengers, going between them and heaven.

Their systems have laid heavy burdens upon man, have fettered him to wearisome rites, and lifeless, needless forms; yet leaving in their hearts the interests, passions and cares of the flesh and the world, untamed, unguided. The religion of Christ has left man free—free from all burdensome rites, free from all unmeaning forms;—but it has touched his soul, and has broken off the shackles of inward sin that bound him there; has purified his motives, elevated his thoughts, chastened his desires, conquered his passions, directed his powers—has reared up a shrine, and given calm waters of holiness and joy in the depths of his spirit that reflect the image of the Redeemer and the beauty of heaven. And as to earth's philosophies, take from them that which is not their own—that which may be the fragments of an early revelation—and how do they compare with the doctrine, the heaven-sent philosophy of Christ? *They* have no standard of stability—no authority of unerring wisdom. The gospel is immutable, for it rests upon eternity—unerring, for it is the word of God. Depending upon mere human reasonings, *they* are dark and uncertain as to the most vital truths—they plant no immortal flowers above the tomb. The gospel throws back the misty curtain, where reason stands trembling, thwarted and dismayed, and reveals the

light of upper worlds. The mysteries of existence, the uncertainties of hypothesis, are illumined with rays of eternal truth. The shores of immortality—

“Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood—
Stand dressed in living green.”

“It is a difficult matter,” says Plato, “to find out the Maker and Parent of the universe ;” and then, he thought it not proper or safe to communicate the truth to all. But the Savior says,—“When ye pray, say—Our Father which art in heaven.” Speaking of a future life, says Socrates, “That these things are so, as I have represented them, it does not become any man of understanding to affirm.” “I am taking a leap in the dark,” says David Hume. But, says Jesus, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.” “A wise man might, upon a fit occasion, commit murder, sacrilege, etc., for none of these things are base in their own nature, if that opinion concerning them be taken away, which was agreed upon for the sake of restraining fools,” is the morality of one. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” says Christ.

Thus, in contrasting the system of Jesus with other religions, with other philosophies, how does it stand out superior in its brightness, its purity, its power, from them all, as he stood out from among men! How may it say, in triumph, to these—"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world."

II. But we will proceed to speak of some specific principles of action, which may not inappropriately be thus contrasted. There are those passions that centre upon self, or operate to the injury of others, on the one hand; and on the other, that expansive spirit of love, known by the name of charity. How narrow and base the one spirit! How does it contract the delicate fibres of the heart, and turn its streams of kindly feeling to bitterness and gall! How nobly operates the other, tuning the soul like a gentle instrument to sympathy, and making its many chords to respond to all the varied utterance of kindred souls! *Revenge*, dark revenge—upon what horrid food does it glut and gorge, feeding upon the anticipated agonies of its victim, and strengthening its sinews in its protracted hunt, even with the baleful scent of blood. Oh! not so sweet-souled *Charity*. Susceptible to insult, it bathes with tears the hand that smites it, turns

and binds up the wounds of him whose arm was raised to crush, and even amid the agonies of death, prays for the forgiveness of its foes. *Selfishness*, suspicious, contracted, stern—it thinks but of its own good, let humanity crave and bleed and suffer as it will. *Charity*,—the world has its thoughts and prayers—for the world it acts—for the world it sacrifices and suffers—and often, often leaves behind as its memorial a martyr's tomb. *Hatred*, how does it scowl in the light of the clear, calm heaven, upon the face of its fellow-man, and how distorted to its vision are all the features and actions of its object! Not so with *Love*—it has a sunny smile, a warm, fond heart; it has an earnest prayer, a gentle word, a beneficial deed for those who want; it embraces wide humanity in its grasp, and thinks and acts for all. Place these different principles in contrast, my hearers: *selfishness*, *revenge*, *hatred*, on the one hand; Christian *charity*, *love*, upon the other; and may not the last say to the first—"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world"?

III. Again, there is *Doubt* on the one hand; on the other, *Faith*. How different these in their operation! The one sees shifting light and shade before it, alternating ever; now rays of

sunshine, and glimpses of fair, green lands—now clouds, from which start misty and distorted shapes ; and so it has no fixed joy, no sure and stable rest. The other serenely, with a clear vision and an unwavering trust, looks far through the rifted cloud, and gazes into heaven. The one starts to hear the winds whistling through its cordage, the creaking timbers, the straining masts, the billows that dash and chafe around its bark, and hurries blindly, darkling, through the mist—the other sets its firm sails, places its compass, leans upon its helm, and reading with attentive soul its chart, glides onward undoubting to its haven and feels already the breath of land upon its brow. The one, even in strength and youth, feels its powers wasting away in racking cares, its heart dried up as by an inward thirst, and stands among the evils of existence and the mementoes of mortality, in sorrow, desolation, fear. The other, old and gray-headed, sits by the grave of the departed, with a placid countenance and a patient soul, believing and rejoicing, weeping yet trusting ; weak, deserted, poor, yet happy ; its treasures laid up above ; its “ heart a passion-flower, in which are the crown of thorns and the cross of Christ.” Such, such are *Doubt* and *Faith*. How many of earth’s pilgrims have experienced them both, and know this to be true !

How different the one from the other! How soaring, how calm, how triumphant, *Faith*! how timid, how sad, how vacillating, *Doubt*! Oh! leaning upon the strength of Revealed Promise, how looks the first back upon the last!—how truly may it exclaim—“Ye are from beneath; I am from above;—ye are of this world; I am not of this world.”

IV. Again: there are *Care* and *Peace*—I mean worldly care, heavenly peace. *This* is never at rest; it sorrows with the sorrow of this world for treasure lost, in the heaping up of which long years have been spent; it frets with disappointment at the loss of some trifling, temporary object. *This* is ever at rest; not with “a calm like that which follows storms,” fitful, liable to be broken; but with a pure, immutable joy, like the waters that are shadowed by the green palms above—like the face of the upper and unchangeable sky. And this peace is away down in the depths of the soul, so that its best and holiest thoughts are calm, and the losses and disappointments of earth leave it not without its consolation and its joy. Worldly care gives a haggard countenance, fires the eye, and makes lean the soul. Not so with this Peace—in the busiest moment it reflects a sweet serenity in the

face, mirrors itself in the gentle, happy look, and flows with its fountain of bliss ever pleasantly and glad in the heart, amid the springs of thought and action. Who has not known care? It gives to the sky a leaden hue, to the earth a dreariness—it plants thorns in the pillow of repose, it feeds itself upon the thoughts of ambition and reaches for a laurel-wreath that crumbles in its grasp—it seeks for wealth, and its gold turns to ashes—it drinks the draught of pleasure, and finds “the unseen serpent that lurks below.” Who would not enjoy *Peace*? How does the deep and yearning spirit sigh for it amid this busy and tumultuous world! “Oh! that I had wings like a dove; then would I flee away and be at rest.” The sweets that *this* offers never cloy; it comes into the yearning heart, and it aches no more; it soothes the throbbing and care-worn brow with a soft and gentle hand, and it throbs not again. Peace, peace, so different from care; so full of activity, and yet it is peace; so needed by the spirit that it comes to rejoice—it is the bliss that angels know. As it displaces from the contrite, repentant soul these tumults, perplexities, anxieties, how may it exclaim, and that soul acknowledge with joy the truth of what it says—“Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.”

V. Let me present one more contrast—*Sin* and *Holiness*. *Sin*, with its burning passions, its evil thoughts, its wicked works. *Holiness*, with its pure motives, its deeds of righteousness, and its divine communion. The one kindles unhallowed fires within the spirit, leads it in a low and grovelling course, and draws it away from God. The other teaches it to love God and to love man, to love all good, lights up in it the flame of pure devotion, and guides it in ways of pleasantness, in paths of peace. The *one* has caused the moral evils of the world, the desolations that man has wrought upon himself and upon his fellow: wars have come forth from it; drunkenness, reviling, thefts and murders have followed in its train; passion has scathed and withered in its track; tears and blood and ashes have strewn its way. The *other* has given those blessings that, where they have fallen, have made earth to be like Eden of old, and caused it almost to mirror heaven. Where it has dwelt, there love has dwelt, and joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. The *one* has alienated man from God and duty, deluded him with fleeting, unsubstantial joys, and made him wretched. The *other* has brought the prodigal home, has reconciled him to his Father, has given him a foretaste of immortal

good, and made him truly happy. The *one* Jesus came to destroy, to break its bands, to trample it in the dust; its memorials are the crown of thorns, the spear, the cross. The *other* Jesus came to bring, to shed abroad like the day-spring from on high in human hearts and make them shout for joy; and *its* memorials are the angels' song, the penitent's tear, the unsealed sepulchre. Oh! is not here a difference? How like day compared with night, beams one in contrast with the other! How wounding, blighting, sad, the effects of *this*; how healing and blessed the results of *that*! How may *Holiness* exclaim to *Sin*—"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world."

I have thus, my hearers, drawn contrasts between principles that now exist upon earth, that agitate the bosom of man. The one class result from an obedience to our own evil desires, our selfish passions, and our unguided hearts; the other are the effects of a religious principle established in the soul. And now let me ask you, which will you choose? Oh! will you not say at once, the Gospel of Jesus Christ before all other systems—charity before selfishness and evil passion, faith before doubt, peace before care, holiness before sin? You *say* so—do you *feel* so? If you feel so, will you not be true to those

better emotions that urge you now? Oh! will you go forth from this place to quell them in a course of sin? to let the pleasures, the interests, the cares of life, spring up within your hearts and choke them? Truth may be illustrated in various ways; by argument, by contrast, by allegory; in many forms it may make its impression upon the mind. To-day, we have shown you truth in brief contrasts. You must have seen that truth evolving from what we have said—the truth that religion is superior to worldliness, inasmuch as the one “is from beneath, the other from above; the one of this world, the other not of this world.” And now let me ask you, again, which will you choose? Shall the claims, the superiority, the benefits of religion be unheeded by you? Shall this sabbath pass by and yet they be unheeded? Oh! I trust not. Go home this day, and in your own hearts communing with God, repent, resolve that you will make this eternal life yours—that the better and the higher principles you will choose out and place above the principles of earth. Prayer will do this, resolution will do this, grace will do this. Let not these entreaties, I beseech you, be unheeded.

“I am not of this world.” How sublime this announcement of the Redeemer, as he stood before his opposers! To leave out all discussion

concerning his nature and his titles, how truly does it describe his own character and the nature of his mission. That lowly prophet, humble, coarse-clad, meek, was the Messiah, long foretold by prophet, priest, and bard. He came. They looked for a king—he was a king; they looked for a conqueror—he was a conqueror: but they knew him not. They looked for the outward pomp, the impress of human regalia—the baton and the sword. They saw not his dignity in his teachings, his authority in his deeds, his power and triumph in spiritual and eternal things. How should they? They were “from beneath; he was from above: they were of this world; he was not of this world.” So there are many at this day who are conscious of no power and beauty in the religion of Jesus, that is superior to aught upon earth. Their hearts have never been opened to its influences—they have never been awakened from their worldly day-dreams to look upon the realities of the soul and of heaven. Their passions urge them—their interests blind them—their cares distract them. Let the voice of Jesus reach them now, let them heed its summons—and the scales shall fall from their eyes, they shall see his beauty and his excellence, and be “born again.”

“Not of this world.” There is a glorious tri-

umph in aught that can say this of itself ; and yet it brings with it mournful associations. We look abroad upon the earth, and the process of everlasting change is going on ; we hear " the sound of universal wasting," and on its most beautiful objects there is written, " passing away." The glory of the rainbow, the purple radiance of the cloud, the tint of the rose of June, are not the only objects that fade before our vision. The lofty, the magnificent, the strong likewise depart, and leave their places vacant. Even the solid monuments, upon which man spent time, toil and wealth, and that have towered for ages above his ashes, crumble down and become mingled with the ashes that they covered. But the inanimate objects of earth, that have no thoughts, that sympathize not with us, and whose places others like them shall supply, are not the only objects that pass away. The living and the loved, the dear ones with whom we hold communion, for whom our hearts put forth their fibres and around whom they cling, whose places can *never* be supplied on earth—*these* leave us also. On the brow of beauty, in the eye of love, upon the form of strength, over the pleasant and familiar face, there comes a change, and we are left desolate. Then it is that, looking upon the mutations of the physical world, we learn that they are but *types* of human affairs,

which shift and change, and have *their* lights and shadows also. So, we say, when we see the nature of this sphere in which we are placed, and of all the objects connected with it, we feel that there is a triumph in aught that can say—"I am not of this world"—a triumph that brings with it sad memories and associations. But, my hearers, there is that within us which can say—"I am not of this world." The redeemed, the loving and trusting soul, with its best hopes fixed above, calm amid all earth's changes, its disappointments, its storms, can look at these passing objects and exclaim—"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world." "Not of *this* world!" then there is *another*? Oh! yes, a brighter, a better world; a world whose beauty never fades, whose joy is eternal. A land of clear waters and green and shady palms, for the weary and broken-hearted pilgrim—then weary and broken-hearted no more. A land of unchanging songs and ceaseless adoration; a land where the lost and the loved meet, with no tears, no sin, no pain, no death, "nor anything else to interrupt their felicity."

My friends, these are some of the reflections that the text inspires. Carry them home with you. Act upon them, I beseech you. Act upon the entreaties which have been made to repent-

ance and religion. May our souls become so changed, so filled with new elements of holiness, so incorporated with them, that from the depths of a new heart each one of us may exclaim, to the sins and errors that he has put by and trampled under foot, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are this world; I am not of this world."

DISCOURSE III.*

THE BURNING OF THE LEXINGTON.

JEREMIAH, xlix. 23.—For they have heard evil tidings; they are faint-hearted: there is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet.

THE topic upon which I propose treating at this time may be thought, by some, trite and untimely; but we do not deem it so. It is true, that great calamities, although they may startle and appal at first, live but a brief time in the memory of the multitude. There is a vivid flash—a momentary shock, when the noisy world shrinks back and is silent—and then the vast and busy machinery goes on again, the sentiment of horror is absorbed in the rush of jarring interests and active life, and the event is apparently forgotten; while the hearts that were peculiarly torn and smitten, are left to bleed alone, and to heal up slowly in the obscurity of private grief and retirement. But in this instance, the cold thrill that ran through every soul upon hearing the “evil tidings,” has not yet ceased to vibrate even in the great mass of community at large. The exclamations of surprise and horror which follow the dreadful announcement are yet pealing upon

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our ears from remote portions of the land. The waters that yawned to receive the wasted treasures, the charred and broken timbers, and the bodies of the drowned, have not yet become quiet and sealed above their awful sepulchres. Still, day after day, disconsolate Love and sorrowing Friendship are called to the sea-shore or the house of the dead, to recognise some lithe and perhaps mangled form, that has been given up and rescued from the deep. Still, ever and anon, some portion of sunken treasure, some relic that was lost with the departed, is plucked all dripping from the bosom of the element, to touch the chord of painful association and tear the wounds of affection afresh. Still, the anxious wife, or child or parent, at the hearth of home—and the distant traveller upon the heaving billows—shudder with apprehension and are cold at the heart, as their thought goes back to that scene of death and terror which surrounded the doomed and burning Lexington. “For they have heard evil tidings; they are faint-hearted: there is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet.”

Let us, then, look awhile at the circumstances of this sad catastrophe. A vessel plying upon the route between two of the most important cities of our country, filled with a multitude of human beings, in sight of a populous shore, in

an early hour of the evening, is suddenly enwrapped in flames—surrounded by the darkness of the night, the inclement winter air, and a waste of cold and icy waters; leaving to its wretched inmates, in almost every instance, nothing but the dreadful alternative of death by the consuming flame or by the freezing flood. The alarm-cry bursts from lip to lip of that startled throng, smiting awfully and solemnly upon each heart, like the tone of its own deep death-knell. Imagination cannot picture, or conceive, the dread reality. What varied circumstances—what shifting scenes in that terrific panorama of death were there; yet, view them from which point you will, all colored with the same appalling gloom—all presenting the dreadful features of terror, despair, and unutterable agony. In what diverse situations did that alarm toll upon the ears of the threatened and the doomed! In what various moods of thought—in what different occupations were they engaged! They had left, but a little while ago, the thronged and busy city, through whose streets, filled with light and life, and presenting all the diversities of a mimic world, they had so lately passed, and they were now, calmly as if under the roofs of their own dwellings, borne on with all the speed of mighty engines towards other thoroughfares of life and

action and joy, where they might mingle among men. Some had grasped warm hands and pressed warm hearts at parting, and bidden a gay or sad, but, as they thought, a brief farewell. Some had left the couch of the sick friend, hurried forth by the urgency of business, with the promise and the thought speedily to return. Some had parted with the traveller's haste, who had already passed over a long and wearisome route, and were looking forward with eager expectation to the welcome of their near and waiting homes. Some had come forth with the gladness and buoyancy of hope, with the strong purpose of gain, with the joyful anticipation of meeting dear and familiar faces. Some had decided to come upon a halting resolution—oh! why *did* they thus decide? Some were far from their homes, and were numbering the days that should bear them back. Some—but we will not pause to enumerate the various circumstances under which the members of that group had set out, and that preceded their solemn end. We all know the many motives which call out man from his home, and place him in the stage, the rail-road car, and the steamboat; and we know, too, the diverse modes in which they are engaged, who journey from city to city of our great land, assured of the safety of the ordinary vehicles of travel. Suffice it

to say, that life and hope, and memories of loved-ones, and innumerable thoughts and sympathies and feelings, were stirring in the hearts of the mass of beings that were so soon to go down, amid the chilliness of winter and the flaming shroud of the conflagration, to the cold and unknown chambers of the deep. The peculiar thoughts and occupations of that moment we do not know, for, alas! the tongues that could tell us are still forever, and the sea is silent—but this much that we have spoken of we *do* know, because we know that such are always the workings of the human heart, and, still and lifeless as they now are, they *then* were of us. How awfully, then, upon their ears, disturbing the course of thought and action, and sending the currents of life and hope back, in ice, to their fountains—how awfully broke that alarum—FIRE!

What a hurried rush for safety and for life was there! What piercing shrieks, bursting from ashy and quivering lips, rose above the hoarse gurgling of the waters, the roar and crackling of the flames, and rent the flushed and heated brow of night! What frantic cries of the husband for the wife, the wife for the husband—the mother clutching wildly for her child, the child sobbing for its mother! What strivings of agony with the hot breath of the flame and the suffocating

smoke—what moanings of the helpless, the trampled and the crushed ! What invocations for aid, shrieked into the ears of mortals as impotent—what fervent prayers, rising through the tumult and storm of the elements to the Eternal Throne ! But still the fierce flame swept relentlessly on, and the waters chafed and shouted for their prey !

The strong, brave man, perchance, was there, who had toiled in sun and storm, and faced the billows and the wind, and travelled by land and by sea. And with a desperate struggle did he meet his death, grappling and striving with the overwhelming and terrific powers around him as though they were living and conquerable things. As he saw behind him, in the fiery jaws of one element, certain destruction, with giant energy did he put by the dense and muffling smoke, and plunged with nerved limbs and dauntless heart into the cold arms of the other. And long did he battle with the waves, and shout and gurgle and shriek and madly toss the icy waters to and fro, and then, benumbed, and dead, he went down, down, and all was still—save a hoarse moaning of the deep, above his burial-place.

Beauty, perhaps, was there, in the bloom of youth and health. But when the alarm-cry came, white was that cheek with a paleness that was the seal of death, and horror glared wildly in

those beaming eyes, and around her frail and delicate form swept the blast of the wreathing flame. That white hand was lifted for a moment above the ridgy billows, one stifled cry was heard, and she was gone. And now the gentle sunlight lingers and the sorrowful winds lament above her bed—but no flowers shall bloom and no tear be shed upon that spot beneath which, with calm brow, she sleeps, in some rocky and garnished chamber—

“Deep in the silent waters,
A thousand fathoms low.”

The esteemed and talented one was there. He who had studied, with the love of the scholar, the sober reason of philosophy and the earnest faith of Religion—whose lips had poured forth the words of instruction and of genius, and whose voice had been heard in the blessed ministrations of the Gospel—was called upon thus to die;—to die suddenly and amid a scene of horror, to die while on his way to fulfil a duty of his sacred station, to die far away from the graves of his fathers and from his native land, and even from the tombs of those dear to him in the home of his adoption, and, oh! to die away from the arms of that devoted wife, who sorrowed for his absence, and waited with yearning fondness for his return. But he died leaving

fresh, green memories in the hearts of those who knew him, and a good name in the world ; and, better than all, he died with his armor on, as a soldier of the Cross. He passed away amid the strife of the physical elements and the sufferings of keenest bodily anguish ; but we may believe that soul that had imbibed the principles of Jesus was calm and triumphant amid it all, and supported and brightened with the undying hope of the Christian.

Maternal affection was there, deep, firm, and true to the last. Doubtless, she struggled long for the boon of life ; not only for herself, oh ! not only for herself, but for that dear babe. But when death came to relieve the little suffering child, and she gazed upon its pale brow and saw that it was dead, when she felt the coldness gathering closer about her own yearning heart, and her eyes growing dim ; still, still was she true to the unconquerable impulse of a mother's love ; and she tore her veil from off her, and cast it about the face of that sleeping one, that the winds and the waves and the ice might not treat it roughly, and that when they should find its little corse, it might be all as unmarred and natural, as if it had been borne in its mother's arms, and laid in the calmness and beauty of its stony slumber at their feet. And then life fluttered and went

out in that true heart, and she sunk to her unknown grave!

And so, in various modes, and under circumstances marked by various degrees of horror, the young, the old, the rich, the poor, the talented, the weak, the strong—tender woman and haughty manhood, the budding youth and the helpless child—so, they were swept away, upon that night, and devoured by the elements; with wild struggle and terrible agonies of death, with the flames hissing behind them and the waters yawning before, they passed from existence, a fearful mass of human life,

“Unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown!”

Oh! what, think you, were the thoughts of that dark and terrific death-hour? The reflections and memories of a life breaking at once upon the throbbing brain, more painful, more torturing, than the flame or flood that was devouring their shrinking bodies! The cold and freezing truth rushing over the heart, that they must die—and die thus! The remembrance of loved ones, of eyes that would flow with weeping for them, of homes that would be desolate, of those that would be left destitute—of forms and faces to be seen in this world no more! And then, the many and varied thoughts that surround the idea

of death—the things of religion, the concerns of the soul—all these breaking in, in one flood, thrilling every artery of the body and every faculty of the mind! Oh! who shall attempt to describe that crisis! They were human. They felt as human beings must ever feel, borne at one sweep from this mortal existence, hurried away from the relations of this life, suddenly, violently, and forever.

There were a few with whom life lingered. But the horrors of that lingering respite, to end in death to most of them, as sure as it was sure that that drifting fabric which was consuming before them would sink in the engulfing waters! In one moment the eager thrill of hope, in the next the cold, withering sensation of despair! At one time, perchance, the shore is almost at hand and the light of comfortable dwellings streaming upon the vision, and the cheering sound of human voices swelling upon the ear; again, and the frail, unmanageable object that buoys them up is swept back by the heaving waves, and over the vision comes the cold, freezing mist, and nought is seen but the waste of waters lighted by the glare of the burning vessel, and the forms of the struggling and the drowned; and nought is heard but the booming of the fire, the rush and weltering of the icy deep, and the shrieks and groans

of agony and distress. And then the thoughts of home, of life, of hope, nerving the arm to battle once more with mad desperation, and quickening the pulses of the heart to throb warmly again ; and then the freezing death, coming with a benumbing torpor, and closing up sound, sense, life, and congealing the blood in its fountains, and turning it to stone around the heart, and the souls of the sufferers, one by one, passed away. In the midst of it all, the burning wreck sends up high and fitful flashes to the dark canopy of night, and reddens with a deeper glow the heated waters around it ; and then, with its fiery spires, towering like stately masts, and its flaming banners all set, it shudders, crashes, and goes down ; the waters one moment yawning to receive their prey, then hissing and boiling over it—and all is dark ! Thus, with the exception of a few—alas ! how few—themselves surviving, almost incredibly, inconceivable sufferings, did those of our fellow-beings who on the thirteenth of January last, in the full enjoyment of life and its usual circumstances, left the homes and the communion of men, go forth to perish in the night, by the flame and the flood ; thus will many of them sleep in the caves of those surging waters, to be seen of those they loved, and who loved them, no more, until the resurrection—until the sea shall have given up its dead ! And those living friends,

those bleeding hearts, those torn and wounded ties—how shall they be comforted and healed? “For they have heard evil tidings; they are faint-hearted: there is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet.”

But I should not fulfil the purpose of this discourse, were I to pause with details which have already, and in different ways, met your eyes and saluted your ears and smitten your hearts. Fearful and soul-thrilling as is this sad event, it is yet a lesson to the living—a book filled with precepts that are written in letters of fire; a terrific beacon, in which are tongues of eloquent and all-impressive wisdom. By circumstances like these, agonizing, spirit-crushing as they have been to individuals—their way charred, blood-marked, strewn with desolation and ashes—by circumstances like these, humanity has been often taught. The precepts which we shall draw from this occurrence will at this time be few; but we wish you to take with you a vivid memory of the catastrophe, and to draw from it yourselves, for your own good and the good of others, such lessons as due and proper reflection will afford.

I In the *first* place, then, let us recognise in this event the mercy of God toward us, and let us cherish a proper sympathy for those who are

afflicted by it. My friends, it might have been one or more of us that was thus called away in darkness and in agony. It might have been one of us—it might have been you or me! it is no uncommon thing for us to journey in the railroad car or the steamboat. Motives comparatively slight will induce us to travel, and such is the rapidity of our modern vehicles, that a few hours will place us far, far from our homes. True, you may feel assured that under no circumstances would it have been your case to be thus situated; and as things have occurred to you, it may be so; but perhaps the least alteration from what has been—a different suggestion, or another circumstance from that which did take place—and you, you might have been on board of the lost Lexington, on the night of the thirteenth of January! But you are here this day. You are here, in the enjoyment of the air and the sunshine of this existence, with the currents of life flowing calmly through your veins, with your relations and your friends around you. You did not go down, on that awful night, to your grave among the waters. You were not of those whose corse whitens on the bottom of the sea, or were laid on the frozen strand—who perished with the billows sounding their dirge, and the flaming vessel for their funeral pyre! You were warm in the comforts of your

dwelling, when the fire and the flood were accomplishing their doom ; you stood, as it were, at a distance and saw the terror—you lived to hear of it—you did not feel. And is it not because of God's mercy that you are here ? Why were they taken and you left ? Praise God ; oh ! let us praise God for his mercies to us-ward. He hath shielded us, while others have been exposed to the storm ; He hath preserved us, while others have perished ! But I trust that you will not forget that there are those who, although they were spared themselves, are bleeding at the heart, and desolate with sorrow. Do not, because yourselves are spared—because your friends are left to you—because no life and no treasure were lost to you—do not congratulate yourselves with selfish joy, and shut up your sympathies within your own souls ! Let this occurrence be the means of improving some of your better feelings, by opening your hearts to the woes of others, and softening them with sympathy. Oh ! there are those who *do* weep, because of this mournful catastrophe !—they *do* weep, although the eye of the sordid world may not see them, and although its heartless crowds have forgotten them and their sorrow. Oh ! the homes and the hearts that were left desolate that night. Oh ! the peculiar nature of that grief, that flowed in upon the mourner's

spirit as coldly as the waters flowed over their lost, their ocean-buried dead !

There were children gathered around their mother's knees in a distant home that night, and perchance they looked up into her gentle face, and caught from it the beaming smile of joy that accompanied the announcement that their father was on his way to greet them ! Alas ! the dark sea lay between him and them, and little did they think, when they opened their eyes, to hail with gladness another day that, they thought, brought him nearer to them—little did they think that the husband, the father, rested cold and still beneath that sea, and that the hours flew on to bring them the tidings that he was lost !

Love lit its watch-fire upon that sad night. It looked out, peering through the darkness, almost in sight of the burning wreck, for the well-known form, so endeared to it by the strongest of earthly bonds. But that form came not. It had passed away from life forever. The bridal altar would never be lighted for him. The true glance of affection should beam upon him no more. His voice of love would never greet the ear—it went out in a lone, wild shriek upon the night air ! The heart that beat for him in anxious expectation would never press *his* heart—the dashing waves had gone over it, and it was cold and still !

A splendid mansion waited for its owner. Its hall, perchance, was lighted, and its doors left ajar; and there were those who listened to catch the echoes of his well-known step. But that mansion received him, living, no more. That midnight lamp might burn on until the dawn, but he would not return. Those doors should open to his touch never again. Those anxious watchers listened in vain for his tread. Oh! sad, sad were the tidings that broke upon their ears, instead of the sounds of that well-known step. Dark, dark was that hearth, from which his familiar face was absent—absent to greet them there no more!

But why draw the veil aside from the varied circumstances of private grief? Were we disposed to do so, can we think to paint the agonies that stir within the urn of tears—the stern and bitter thoughts that rend the innermost souls of the bereft? Oh! for these sorrowing ones let your tenderest sympathies be awakened. They are human beings like you—human beings, upon whom has fallen this calamity with stifling, crushing weight. Pity them, then, as brethren—as children of a common humanity, liable to the same keen feelings of joy and wo. Learn from this event to love the Lord thy God. Behold how merciful he has been that thou art spared. Learn to love thy neighbor as thyself—to pity

these afflicted ones ;—" For they have heard evil tidings ; they are faint-hearted : there is sorrow on the sea ; it cannot be quiet." May God be with them ! May Jesus visit them ! May He, who alone can give efficient help, pour balm upon the wounded heart of the widow, and shield, and preserve, and guide the destitute orphan, and give a support to the bowed and mourning parent, and bestow consolation upon all the bereaved relatives and friends ! And may He put it into our minds to do our whole duty in this matter !

II. We learn from this dread event how frail and uncertain are human affairs. Look at the circumstances in which those, our fellow-beings, were taken away. Did they perish amid the carnage of desolating battle ? Did they perish on the distant ocean, far from human homes, amid its booming surges and its lonely rocks, in tempest and in storm ? Did they die under the blast of the deadly pestilence, when the coming of its swift wing was hourly looked for ? Was it amid the whirlwind or the earthquake that they passed away ? No !—in none of these forms. They were swept away on the frequented waters of a familiar journey—waters that are generally passed over in a short space of time. They were destroyed in a vessel in which thousands had been

borne in perfect safety, and in which we, a few hours before, would have ventured, it is probable, with perfect confidence. They were going from place to place, in sight of populous towns and villages, upon an ordinary journey, expecting, many of them, with the early day to be at their journey's end. The shock fell upon them as if from the cloudless heaven at noon-day—as though it had sprung from the depths of the sea suddenly in their path before them. No note of preparation—no idea of any such contingency, probably—but all at once the stern, quick alarm, and the burst of the smoke, followed by the sheeted flame !

My hearers, property, friends, our own lives are thus liable to be lost. The ordinary circumstances of security possess no guarantee of continued safety. All things earthly are frail and unstable. Joy may be followed the next moment by sorrow—health by sickness—life by death. Let us remember this. “Man cometh forth like a flower,” says Job, “and is cut down ; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.” It is not wisdom to hide these facts from ourselves—to strive to forget them. It is true, we may not be called upon to leave existence in this way ; but we are liable. We should feel that earth is not our end and our eternal abiding-place, and we should act accordingly. We throw ourselves into

the absorbing pursuits of life ; we mingle with and engage in its busy actions, and we forget that suddenly, we may be called away from these pursuits and actions. But if we look upon human life and its objects aright ; if we arm ourselves with a right preparation for whatever may occur, then, in one sense, whatever may occur will not take us by surprise. The bosom of the sun-lit waters is in a moment ruffled, and broken, and darkened by the storm. The calm, blue face of the sky is soon veiled with murky and tempest-breathing clouds. So the waters of human happiness, that seemed to mirror images of everlasting joy and beauty, are, in a moment, broken and darkened, and lashed into sorrow. So the calm sky of prosperity and peace is shadowed by clouds and swept by tempests. I know that the point which I am now urging is trite and well known ; but, remember, it is also true. Its truth has been signally taught us from the flames of the burning Lexington. Let us not depend too much upon earthly things. Let us not calculate too much upon present possession—even to life itself. Let us ever be watchful, and be prepared for whatever may come !

III. *Finally* : I would make our topic the foundation for the remark, that religion is the

only principle that can prepare us for, and assist us amid, the most trying and dreadful circumstances. What were all other possessions at that terrific crisis upon which our thoughts have been dwelling? Could man do them any good? Lo! the harbors were closed, and the means of assistance locked in by ribs of solid ice; and in sight of that flaming signal of distress, in hearing of those shouts and groans of agony, man stood baulked, impotent and aghast. Could ingenuity and reason avail them? They could build no bridge across that ocean waste, and the ordinary preservatives and prolongers of life were rendered useless by the relentless cold of the winter wind and the winter flood! Could wealth advantage them? They strewed the worthless coin upon the deck, and trampled it beneath their feet, like dust and ashes; seizing with frantic haste the vessels in which it had been so carefully packed, to aid in quenching the raging flames! Could human strength avail them? It might wrench away the smouldering beams, it might twine the cord round the floating bales—but it could not overcome the fearful elements! Could human love rescue them? They laid not then upon the downy couch, with the soft hands of friends to minister to them, and with the healing medicine for their lips. Their bed was upon the

icy deep, and though affection might wreath its arms around the loved object, and ward off awhile the flame and the cold, yet down it went, at last, with that loved object, heart to heart, and both pulseless, cold, and still!

But there was one principle that could soothe and aid even there—that could walk those billows like Jesus; and though it did not stay the devouring and tumultuous elements, could say to the troubled soul, “Peace, peace, be still!”—could resign the perishing to their lot—could check the tears that froze as they fell—could bid the departing spirit look calmly through the night and the cloud, through the flame and the flood, as passages to an immortal home, where are no pain, nor sorrow, nor death!—and that principle was Religion. How many did it thus soothe amid those stunning and overwhelming waves, flashing upon their terror and their darkness, a beacon from the Angel-land—breathing, through the tumult of their mortal struggle, sweet music from chords that are strung in heaven?

Whose was this joy then, we know not; but this we know, that it is a principle adapted to all our circumstances, and one which we should all possess. It is sure—it is triumphant. It is that preparation which we all need, and of which I spoke under the last head. I know of nothing

else that I can recommend, that will enable us to meet the contingencies, the certainties of life. I know of nothing which I can present with so much confidence to those afflicted ones who mourn this sad event, "and will not be comforted"—to those who are afflicted with any of life's ills, under any circumstances. Amid the fiercest tempest, through the darkest cloud, it streams, a ray of unfailing sunshine, from the throne of the Eternal, brightening around the path of the weary pilgrim, and filling his innermost soul with peace, with promise and with joy. Then, treasures may take their flight, but he has laid up treasures above. Then, friends may pass away, but an ever-present Friend is with him, and he hopes to meet those others again. Then, life may be called for, but his last hour, be it where it may, is lighted with triumph, and he is ready to go, and he leans and dies on the bosom of Jesus.

We, in our frailty and finite comprehension, will not presume to stand up and question in this matter. Darkness has been around the Throne, but we will believe that a wise purpose moves behind the cloud. Yes! we will believe that healing shall follow these stripes; that good shall spring from this affliction and these ashes; yea, that immortal hope and joy shall rise, all beam-

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ing, from the cold depths of the ocean sepulchre!

But to you, my hearers, I recommend this principle of religion—the best guide through life, the best aid and support in death. May its consolation and its power be yours! Then, whether you pass from existence by the flame or the flood, as did the sufferers of the Lexington, or from the pillow of the couch of home—you will pass in triumph and in joy. With the glare and the tumult of this dread catastrophe vividly before you, arm yourselves with an invulnerable panoply. Lay hold of the principle of religion, I beseech you. Establish it in the depths of your souls!

DISCOURSE IV.

THE CHRISTIAN DISPOSITION.

LUKE xviii. 16.—Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

It is one of the peculiar traits of the religion of Jesus Christ, that it is adapted to all classes and conditions of men. It has truths that are fitted to the capacities of the little child, when it first begins to exercise its faculties of thought, and opens its eyes intelligently upon the hills and valleys and waters of the world in which it is placed. But as that child advances in years, and grows into the early summer of its life, it may take the Book and open upon these same truths, and still it will find that they are fitted to its condition, and that they satisfy its indefinite longings; and as he glides into maturity, and his mental powers become strong, and he begins to grasp at speculation and to battle with doubt, to exercise reason like a skilful weapon, and to use imagination like a well-trained gift—as he sits down in all the pride of philosophy, with a mind that is stored with riches of knowledge which it has gathered from ocean, earth, and

air—as he sits down, I say, in all the vigor and fulness of a well-trained and polished intellect, and opens the Bible at the places where his childish fingers used to linger among the leaves, and where his young eyes were arrested and his young spirit taught—he will find that these same truths are still adapted to his condition—that they tax to the full his mental energies, that they transcend the purest of his ideas of the beautiful, the good, and the true, and fill, as no other teachings can fill, the infinite aspirations of his soul. And so, when he grows old, when the dreams of fancy fade away, and the hand of age is laid sternly upon him, and the blossoms of life's spring-time, and the promise of its summer, and the ripe fruit of its early autumn lie in his path no more—when he begins to look around for something beside his own proud confidence of strength to lean upon, and wants a voice to speak soothingly and cheerily to his drooping spirit, he shall take up that old, worn Bible, he shall turn over to the passages that he read by the light of life's sunshine, and, as tear follows tear down his rugged cheek, he shall read on—and he shall find that these same truths are enough for him still—that they are just what he needs—that the light they shed as from the eternal world tinges the dark clouds of memory

with the hues of promise, and that while earthly joys have withered, these have a power to strew fresh blossoms on the pathway to the grave.

And not only is the Gospel adapted to man as an individual, in the various stages of his existence—but also to mankind in its various classes of high and low, rich and poor, ignorant and learned. You shall take this Bible to the untutored son of the forest, and read him some of the simple and precious truths that fell from the lips of Jesus, and he will understand you—a gleam will break athwart the dark conceptions of his superstitious mind, and he will have glimpses of the same bright revelations that glide before the rapt vision of the advanced and spiritual Christian. The Gospel is a system that found among its earliest supporters the poor, the lowly, and the oppressed of this world. And it is peculiarly the poor man's religion to this day. It is his solace in all his cares, it lightens his labor, it comforts his afflictions. He reads it by his cottage-door, when the toil of the day is over, and he forgets the bitterness and the deprivations of his poverty—he binds its precepts upon his heart, and goes forth bravely to battle with the world and to bear his lot. But admirably adapted to the poor and the obscure as it is, it has been sent also for the rich, and it is adapted to him likewise.

He shall learn from it how to lay up his treasures in heaven, and how to dispose of his earthly wealth, and how to become poor in spirit for Christ's sake ; and even if he be a king, he may retire from the cares of state, to ponder with a refreshed spirit upon its sacred pages, and, like the pious David, he may lay aside his diadem, to take up the harp of devotion, and to find some of his sweetest moments those in which he is employed in making music with its strings.

So, to all classes and conditions of men you may take the Gospel, the pure, simple Gospel, and they will receive it gladly—they will comprehend a portion, at least, of its great truths ; they will be enabled to take these seeds and plant them in their hearts ; and if they are watered by dews of divine grace—by holy rain from heaven—and warmed by the sunshine from above, they will spring up and ripen in a precious harvest.

The circumstances of our text are beautiful and affecting. Some had brought unto our Savior little children, in order that he might touch them. The disciples saw this, and rebuked them ; the motive for doing which is not explained. But our Lord did not rebuke them. He called them unto him, and said—"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not

for of such is the kingdom of God." In another place we are told that "he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." This Great Teacher from God—who had come to establish a kingdom wider than any of earth's empires, and that was to endure forever—who taught a wisdom loftier and mightier than any of the schools—whose days were employed in incessant labor, in wonderful works—healing the sick, restoring the maimed, raising the dead—whose precepts were made to bear upon the souls of men, and who read their very thoughts—who was to toil, to suffer, and to die—yea! who was the express Image of God's Person—whose advent prophets and bards had foretold, and angels ushered in, and whose shoe's latchet the Preacher of the wilderness declared himself not worthy to unloose;—this Great Teacher, I say, in the midst of his glorious and wondrous work, with all his honor and his dignity and his power—stooped to notice little children—took them in his arms, laid his hand upon their heads, and blessed them. Let every little child hear this,—that Jesus of Nazareth of whom you have often heard, who was so good so kind, so great, when he was upon earth, not only labored and prayed for you, and died upon the cross—but he took little children, like you

in his arms, and laid his gentle hand upon their heads, and blessed them. You will love this Jesus, you will read his words, you will imitate his life, my young friends, will you not?

And I repeat, my hearers, this was a beautiful and affecting circumstance. Christ had just been rebuking the sentiment of spiritual pride. He had illustrated his doctrine by the parable of two men who went up into the temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The one enumerated his acts of supposed righteousness; the other stood afar off, with downcast eyes, smiting his breast, and crying—"God be merciful to me a sinner." And there, then, was the rebuked yet haughty Pharisee, thronging around him, and peering out at him with malignant countenance here and there through the crowd—here the curious people, stirred by various emotions, yet all pressing to catch a glimpse and to hear the words of this extraordinary Teacher. There stood the respectful and humble disciples, drinking in with glad hearts his gracious precepts—when, turning from this subject, that so well illustrated the internal purity and spiritual requirements of his religion, he took these little children in his arms, and, blessing them, made this the occasion of exhibiting another trait of that Gospel which he came to proclaim. He

showed them how comprehensive, how large it was—that it welcomed not only the haughty Pharisee, the learned scribe, the mature man, but even the little child—that the Savior had a hand and a voice for them likewise. And, perchance, that kind, that meek and sorrowful countenance, in the presence of that gazing multitude, in the face of the sneering Pharisee, beamed with a smile, and his heart yearned with tender sympathy, as he turned away from the callous looks of the man of the world—from the proud, unmelting lineaments of the Rabbi and the philosopher, and sought the open and innocent features of childhood. And he exclaimed—“Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.”

Yes, as we have already suggested, the Gospel is adapted to childhood also. It is not alone for the acting and tempest-tossed man. It is not alone for the shadowed pathway of old age. It is for him whose feet have just begun to press the threshold of action. It comes to you, little children, it takes you with a gentle hand, and will lead you, if you will, as your father, and your mother are not able to lead you, through the thorny maze that opens before you. It speaks to you with a soft, kind voice, and says, “My son, my daughter, give me thine heart.” “Re-

member now thy Creator, in the days of thy youth." Little children, I ask you again, will you study this book that tells you of this Jesus? Will you do as he commands? If so, you will be happy, and pure, and good. You must, if you live, go out, by-and-by, and mingle among men. You will need something to tell you how to act. You will find that these things that look so bright and beautiful to you now, will not, cannot, make you as happy as you will wish; and you will find, if you do as the Savior has commanded, that you will then be happy—that you will then know how to act. Oh! come, then, to Christ. Come to the Being who has said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Though your father and your mother may not be with you in every place, to protect and guide you, and to give you that which is good for you; yet God is able to do this, and more, far more than they can do for you. Obey God then. Strive to act like Christ; and, again I say to you, you will be good and happy, and your Heavenly Father will bless you.

But, to leave this topic, my hearers, I would direct your attention to the latter clause of the text: "For of such is the kingdom of God." This is a great and important truth. The deni-

zens of the kingdom of God are like little children. This is the effect of the religion of Jesus Christ; it takes the haughtiest and the loftiest of men, and melts their hearts, and purifies their vision, and makes them as dear little children.

There is a beautiful simplicity in childhood. There is a gushing and sincere love, an earnest and artless truth, an openness and frankness of spirit, all unworn and unhardened by attrition and collision with the rough edges, and with the polished, flinty formalities of the world. Who that has gazed upon the working brow, the restless, fevered eye, the studied, artificial lineaments of the man, can realize that that was once the face of a little child—alternately shadowed and lighted by tears and smiles, like the heaven of an April day, and with tears and smiles that spring from the heart too? That was once the face of a little child, reflecting sincere emotions, rejoicing in the sunshine and the flowers of the present, without a sigh for the past, or a care for the future—with no dark plots, no cunning intrigues, no heartless schooling of the features to suit circumstances—all fresh, free, joyous! Oh! what a change. Yes, a change. The countenance but mirrors the phases of the soul, and the soul has changed. *That* has grown older, and world-thoughts have crept in, and the seeds of deep and strong passions

have been planted there—and this is the result, Oh! who that travels the beaten and dusty highways of manhood, and toils and schemes and deals with the world, who lays down an aching head upon his pillow at night, and rises with restless energy to go out and battle again in the morning—Oh! who that looks in and reads his heart, and sees the lines that care and sin and violent passion have traced there with their withered fingers; who, when he feels and sees all this, does not sometimes wish that he were a child again, with his guileless laugh and his simple truth—with his free air and his flowers—with his sweet sleep and his unsuspecting and trusting disposition? It may not be; it is our duty—nay, our joy, to go forward; but the purity and the gladness of childhood *will* come back upon us with their gentle memories, and, alas! it is often that we never experience such purity and gladness in all the triumphs of our after years.

But what does this mean—we are to become as little children in order to be fit for the kingdom of God? and we cannot throw off the weight of years; we cannot break the meshes of care and interest, and the strong and pressing bonds of duty, and go back to our young and sunny days. How are we to be as little children? My hearers, we are to be as little children in our *dis-*

positions. We are to cultivate the confidence, the simplicity, the humility and the truth of children. *Childlike* is precisely the definition of the christian disposition. It takes its disciples from the bustle and forms and warfare of life, and sets them down at the feet of Jesus, as little children. And of what other religion—of what philosophy—can this be said—that its great object is to make men gentle and childlike in their dispositions? We know of none. It is a peculiarity of the Gospel.

But you will understand here what this means, that the kingdom of heaven is occupied, is possessed by those who are like little children. We are not to suppose that they are to be like little children in regard to active life. We are not to throw by the duties and the occupations of manhood, nor the relations and associations that spring from these. Man is made to be an active being, and is required to put forth his strongest energies, and to press on with the toils and the duties of existence. He cannot go back to the calm and careless enjoyments of childhood—he cannot throw by the restraints of business and the requirements of society—and it is well for him that he cannot. It is well for his spiritual nature that he cannot. The soul is invigorated and advanced and improved in the active scenes in which he is called to mingle, and the occur-

rences that chequer the line of this busy life draw out faculties and nourish sentiments within, that otherwise would throb feebly, or lie dormant. We are to be denizens of the kingdom of God, and yet are to live on this earth. We are to walk its by-ways and its streets—to jostle in the eager crowd—to exchange the salutations of brethren—to sympathize and to associate with our fellow-men—to perform our allotted labors; and yet to keep a calm look beyond—to raise our eyes ever and anon to the crystal gates of the Paradise above us—to step aside and get upon some height above the troubled and feverish atmosphere of the world, where we may hold communion with higher principles, and have our spirits refreshed by “breezes from the hills of heaven.” So, we are not to be as little children in regard to the active scenes and duties of life—in throwing by care and business, and seeking only present pleasures and present ends. We are to be like children in our abstinence from the sinful pursuits and entertainments of life—in our freedom from its dark, plotting, and ambitious schemes of evil, and subtle and selfish striving for mere individual gain. In this way we are to be as little children. So let us ever be!

Again: We are not to suppose that, in order to a meetness for the kingdom of God, we are to be

ignorant, like little children. I doubt not, my hearers, there have been many ignorant men who have been very good men, and that there have been many learned men who have been very proud and sinful men. But I have yet to learn that ignorance is an essential quality of the christian character—that it makes any person peculiarly meet for the kingdom of God, or that any person is good because he *is* ignorant. No, these faculties that we have, so high and soaring in their nature, are given us to be used—to be exercised—and not to be dwarfed and fettered. There can be no argument gathered here from the fact that the apostles were ignorant and unlearned men. They might have been unskilled in the polished lore of the schools—but it is to be remembered that, leaving out of view the information and intelligence which they may have possessed naturally, they were endowed with special spiritual communications, and were gifted with a wisdom and an eloquence divine. These extraordinary gifts no earthly member of God's kingdom now possesses, and, therefore, his ignorance places him in a far different position from that in which the Galilean fishermen were placed. No—ignorance is no quality of the christian character. On the contrary, it is too often the parent and the nurse of superstition, uncharitableness, error, and spirit-

ual pride. So far is it from being wrong to cultivate the intellect and to store it with knowledge, that we hold it to be the binding duty of the disciple of Jesus Christ to improve and enlarge his intellectual faculties. He sees more of God with every advance he makes. He learns how to adore and to glorify him more. He gets above the earth, and has a wider and more splendid view, and truth after truth comes gliding in upon his vision—each like a new, bright world—that, down in the valleys and low places, he had never seen. He is the very one, of all others, who should study and learn; for he perceives the true end of knowledge, and will use his acquirements aright. Not only do the mental and moral powers go together and aid each other in this world, but will they not go hand in hand through the ages of eternity? *This* discovering new objects of wonder, *that* tuning the heart to praise—*this* soaring aloft in other realms, and gathering wisdom from the shores of other worlds, *that* bowing down in worship at every new evidence of divine power, and acknowledging with a deeper sentiment that “the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” The moral and the intellectual faculties—they will live forever in the essences of our being. The soul will mount by them, as with wings, from world to world—will drink in the floods of beauty

that roll in distant spheres of this vast universe—will traverse the illimitable fields of immortality or shine like a star before the throne of God. If this is to be so, the intellectual faculty is not to be neglected—nay, it cannot be without injury to the moral power. Those gifted spirits that stand nearest the gates of heaven—that have the clearest view of the glory of the future—have been men of mighty intellects—of soaring and curious minds.

But, you say, this thirst for knowledge has led men to be rash and proud—to contemn religion, and to worship the idols that their haughty knowledge has set up within their own souls. True, my hearers, this may be the case; but then these evils did not flow from an over-cultivation of the intellect, but from too little attention to the heart. Here lies the evil. The intellect is made the all. All the resources of mental energy are drawn upon to aid that, and hence the wellsprings in the depths of the spirit become neglected, and choked up, and dried; and the passions, all untamed, rankle and grow wild in the breast of the clearest reason and the brightest imagination. But let them go together—the moral and the intellectual powers; let a man cultivate a refined taste, a strong understanding, a well-stored memory, a penetrating reason; and then let him carry a devout, a warm, a sympathizing heart

beneath it all—the source of his emotions and the coloring of his thoughts—and you will see a true man ; yea, a man who, if he act consistently, will be as a little child in the kingdom of God. I doubt, after all, if ever a man of true intellectual cultivation was an atheist. I doubt if he ever entered into a career of vice and sin without feeling compunction and bitter remorse at his heart—without being more fully aware that he was doing wrong—and with a keener sensibility, too, than the ignorant vicious man. Atheism is but the result of a shallow philosophy ; you will find those whom it claims as its master-spirits, when closely pushed, sheltering under some bright and mystic subterfuge—some Pantheistic or sceptical system. As Lord Bacon expresses the idea—a smattering of knowledge, a little step beyond the common limits of investigation, where new and wonderful objects begin to burst upon the vision and to overawe and dazzle it, may cause a man to be an atheist ; but progress in that path—a few steps farther—and he acknowledges God and religion once more. The mightiest minds have been no enemies to religion. This same Lord Bacon—the profound master, the inductive philosopher—was a believer in God and religion ; so was Newton, standing on the high summit of earthly wisdom, and reading the stars.

So was Locke—so was rapt and tuneful Milton. No, my hearers ; you may be an humble, child-like, loving follower of Christ, without being an ignorant one. This we do not take to be the meaning of our Savior, when he says—“Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God.”

Once more : We are not to infer that, in order to be as little children, we are to be unmanly, or wanting in energy and courage. Our simplicity is not to be a superficial, ignorant simplicity, which would make us appear in the odious sense of the term—*childish*. “Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,” was a certain injunction. If we are to go forth into the world, as sheep among wolves, we are to see to it that we are not preyed upon by those wolves, to our own injury and the injury of those connected with us. The Christian is not to be a person devoid of all shrewdness and prudence. He is to wear *defensive* armor, as he often comes in contact with offensive weapons. He is not to be over-credulous, unsuspecting, unsophisticated. This would make him a weak and unstable character, rather than a dauntless soldier of the Cross. Neither is he to be a timid, fearful character—he is to be a man of courage, nay, even of daring when occasion requires. He is to be firm, manly, strong and brave. Thus is

he to be in his warfare with sin—in his striving with difficulties—in his self-denial and his resolutions. Some of the shrewdest, firmest, boldest men have been Christians—have set their feet upon a rock, and drawn their blades, and stood up and contended against a host. I can see no inconsistency between such a character and the child-like disposition that the text describes. Against sin, against evil, they are thus to be arrayed—this is their outward panoply—the armor necessary for them in their conflicts; but the *disposition*, the *heart*, is, at the same time, meek and mild—meek and mild whenever meekness and mildness are virtues—open to sympathy—open to the voice of truth, of God—trusting, confiding, following where He directs or leads. In this way are they as children—in this way may it be said—“of such is the kingdom of God.”

You will understand now the meaning of Christ, when he says—“Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.” In another place, he says that we are to receive the kingdom of God as little children. We are to come to Christ, to believe, to trust, to follow and submit. We are to throw by the iron panoply of our pride—we are to soften our stern and callous hearts, and open them to gentle and loving dispositions.

This it is to be "born again." It is to become in our feelings towards God and religious duty as little children. We are to go back in spirit and commune once more with sinless, guileless thoughts. We are to throw by our schemes of mere earthly ambition, earthly gain, earthly pleasure; and come and sit at the feet of Jesus, and hear his gracious words, and implicitly believe and obey them. We are to look upon all men as our brethren, and to sympathize earnestly with them—to love them as children love one another, and to feel that we are not the only beings on this wide earth.

It is a sweet thought, too, that such is the disposition of the dwellers of heaven, and will be forever. The pure and sinless angels that worship before God's throne—that dwell in happy bands, in green bowers, by clear streams of Paradise—are not, after all, like the robed philosophers, the haughty monarchs, the laurelled great-men of earth. No, they are like little children. Their pure thoughts are mirrored in their faces as they bend above their lyres, and all there is innocence, and love, and peace—like the scenes that are imaged in the waters at their feet. And so is it and will it be with the just made perfect. When the toil-worn pilgrim of earth shall lay by his staff and his dusty sandals at the door of

the grave, he goes through its portals to be as a little child. When the warrior for righteousness breaks his sword and puts off his armor forever, and takes his crown and his palm, he will be as a little child. When the suffering and the weary go up to rest from their labors, they will sit at the feet of Jesus, and be as little children.

Cultivate, I beseech you, this childlike disposition. Throw by these heavy sins, these gross passions, these formal devices ; and come, penitent, humble, loving, trusting, to the foot of the throne. Do this now. Cherish this childlike spirit ever. And as little children may we meet and sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, throughout eternal ages.

DISCOURSE V.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE.

James iii. 8.—But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

ONE of the richest gifts that we enjoy is that of speech—one of the noblest instruments that plays in the full-choired harmony of the universe, is the human voice. Sweeping in its power of utterance, from the softest cadence to the loudest note, it has a perfect mastery over every chord of sentiment and passion. Without it, the communications of mighty thought would be uncertain and confused, the treasures of each intellect would be buried in itself, and wisdom would have not even the marble lips of an oracle to give it utterance. Without it, the charm of social life would be broken, the sympathies and affections would lose their most powerful agent, and men would exist as so many statues, animated and expressive, it is true, but still babbling and tuneless. The speech and persuasion of love—the kind words of friendship—the song that the mother breathes over the cradle-bed—the prayer that the worshipper sends up from the family

altar; all the harmonies of associated life, of human fellowship, would be wanting, and there be nothing in their stead but sad, unnatural silence, or moans and murmurs, the echoes of restless waves of thought and emotion, ebbing and beating without a vent, far down in the troubled breast. The noblest expressions, too, of the great soul would be lost. Deep and warm are its aspirations—it catches flame and burns in its upward flight; but without the power of gushing forth in words, it would muse with its own vast thoughts, and kindle and consume to ashes upon the quenchless coals within. Poetry would not pour its floods of life and light—patriotism would never lift its thrilling voice—eloquence would be dumb as the tomb—love devoid of its richest instrument—religion without its sweetest privileges and its most efficient means—if, with all our gifts and all our powers, we had not the gift of speech, the power of utterance.

From what has been said, my friends, I would have you learn the value of speech—its importance and its power. But I would particularly direct your attention at this time to the fact, that, while the tongue is thus necessary and useful for the enjoyment and the good of life, it is equally capable of being an instrument of evil—the most powerful, perhaps, in human possession. The

chapter from which we have taken our text is full and impressive upon this subject. It speaks of the great influence of the tongue, and, while it acknowledges it to be a little member of the human body, it refers to that small piece of iron called the bit, with which we master one of the fleetest and most powerful animals—it refers to that comparatively insignificant portion of a vessel, the helm, by which the vast ship is swayed about and guided by the steersman, amid fierce winds and surging seas; and then, bringing these comparisons to bear upon the point, it says—“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!” Small as it is, in comparison to the body of man—like the bit to the horse, the helm to the ship—small as it is, the writer says—“The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.”

These expressions strongly illustrate the evil force—the immensely hurtful and destructive power of the tongue, when used as the agent of a wrong impulse or a bad heart. You will agree with me, then, as to the importance of the subject upon which we propose treating at this

time, when we consider the great power which we have in the gift of speech, and our aptness and capacity to pervert and abuse that gift.

It is my intention to select as my topic at this time—*the government of the tongue*; and, in doing so, it will be well, perhaps, to consider the text. Construed literally, we should be deprived of an important point which we would impress upon you, viz., the reformation, by each individual, of his or her evil practices in speech; for it says, “the tongue *can no man tame*;” and if we read this absolutely, all arguments for reformation would seem to be useless, for then the taming of the tongue is declared out of all human power. But this appears not to be the proper rendering of the text; good commentators translate the original Greek so as to give this idea—which we presume to be the correct one:—“the tongue *of others* can no man tame;”—you can tame your tongue, your neighbor can tame his—each one can tame his or her tongue; but not the tongue of another. It is in this respect “an unruly evil, full of deadly poison;” and you see, taken in this sense, the truth and force of the context—“For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue [of other men] can no man tame.”

And this is most true. You can tame the wild notes of the wood-bird into the measured harmony of human song—you can play with the mane of the trained lion, and sport even with the speckled serpent ; but the outbreakings of another's tongue—its scathing fire—its boisterous, stormy flood, you cannot stay ; the reformation is left entirely to individual will—and each one must, individually, carry out the government of the tongue.

I would have each one, then, while I proceed to specify some of the evil ways in which the tongue is employed, consider for himself or for herself, Am I guilty in any of these respects ? and if conscience says “yes,” I do beseech you to resolve from this moment that you will no more abuse so noble a faculty as that of speech. Let each individual attend to what I have to say.

I am to mention some of the evil ways in which it is very common for the tongue to be employed.

I. And, *first*, I will specify the great evil of *slander*. There are many, many in community, my friends, who can feelingly say of the tongue, in this respect—“Truly it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison ;” and who, considering the slight and baseless causes which have issued in

the loss of sympathy and the ruin of character, can exclaim with anguished hearts—"Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" This is a crying evil in society. It has crushed a thousand hopes, and stung to the very death many a fair and spotless reputation. I would have you consider from what small sources this dread principle gathers its blackness and its venom. They are few, I will believe they are *very* few, who have the fiendish, the vampyre-like disposition, to sit down deliberately and mar another's fair character, and feed upon that which is more vital than his heart's blood. They must be few, who can take a stainless reputation, that has walked among men respected and esteemed, and breathe upon it until it withers. No;—this is not the way in which slander generally operates. It has a mode more sure and more deadly than this. To come right out with blasting charges, and hurl them in the very face of its victim, would be to court scrutiny, and to breed an indignant re-action of sentiment that would surely detect and destroy. And so it takes a deeper and more sinuous course. It begins with vague, significant surmise, and small, broken hints. It walks cautiously and hidden, like a tiger in a jungle, creeping for its prey. It begins with whispers; and such is the state of public

sentiment, my friends, that one of these whispers is enough to shadow and becloud the brightest character—like a breath upon a looking-glass. Sorrow for him concerning whom one of these meaning *whispers* is circulated. I care not what his reputation may be, the vilest minion of the streets shall have in one of these whispers enough to make men lift their brows as he passes, and take his proffered hand suspiciously. But the slander begins with whispers. It breaks out all at once in words, until anon it becomes a bold, direct charge, that the accused, however fair and innocent, finds it next to impossible to refute; for it is of such a nature that he is wholly unprepared to meet it. It falls upon him as would the astounding shock of a thunderbolt from a clear sky. But the suddenness of the charge constitutes not its chief vexation and malignity. He cannot trace its author. He lays, as he thinks, his hand upon him, and, lo! like the ghost in Hamlet, when he would strike at him—

‘He is here!’

He is here!

He is gone!”

Could he but find the first accuser—the original framer and propagator of the injurious report, he might stand up boldly and confront him in the face of the world. But that accuser cannot be

found. The injured party finds himself in all the toils of an evil report—his character suffering—his attempts at explanation misunderstood; without one charitable, sympathizing heart, or one aiding hand. Now, the fact of the case is, the slander, as it has become current in the popular mouth, is not what that slander was when it started; and could he but take it up in its worst shape, and trace it back, he would find that in its original form it was but a small hint—a dim and minute germ, from whence has grown by degrees, and by transition from man to man, this odious and deadly calumny.

Such is slander. Oh! my friends, let me entreat you to beware of giving it birth or circulation. I do not believe that one of you would deliberately sit down and misrepresent the actions or misstate the words of another, but, remember, this we have shown is not the common or most fatal mode of slander. Remember, it starts with the whisper, the suspicious surmise—and, oh! avoid the whisper or the surmise, that issues in such dreadful consequences. Yes—I say dreadful consequences; for is not the destruction of reputation and of hope a dreadful consequence? Is not the forfeiting of friendship, the sinking of personal energy and of self-respect in cold apathy, or violent despair, a dreadful consequence? Is not the deep punishment that visit

the guilty, falling upon the innocent, conscious but helpless in his innocence, a dreadful consequence? You would not hurt a hair of your neighbor's head, but, oh! with what a fine and vital chord do you deal, when you snap idly the most tiny thread of character! No character!—reputation lost!—all by the fell blow of slander! How many have suffered in this way! Young, perhaps, in the full vigor of life and hope, a man has just started out in the world. A family is gathering around him, that looks to him for help. The hopes that have been flitting before him, weaving their tissues in “many-colored spells,” have begun to take a shape and a reality. The steps that will establish him in society, and make certain his future prosperity, are right before him and but few. All this bright prospect beams upon him, when suddenly the whole is marred and lost. A stroke is aimed at his character—men look at him suspiciously—the very air around him becomes tainted with evil reports, and the world closes its doors upon him. He retires to his home, and there, perhaps, the foul calumny has entered before him, and chilled towards him the hearts of those who, of all upon earth, he loves dearest. But, as is more probably the case, the arms of weeping love are thrown around him, too feeble to shield him from the keen peltings with-

out—little hands are stretched up to him for support, that, alas! can no longer aid them. Those connected with him suffer also the deadly attainder, and, perhaps, they are left, like lepers, to starve and sicken alone; while he goes down to the grave, or crouches through life with life's very essence turned to bitterness, and all his hopes withered. Now, could he have traced the stream of that calumny, he would have found its issue in some light jest or hasty word; or, perhaps, some enemy, not able to bring an open accusation, face to face, in his mean revenge and cowardly fear, used some agent for his purpose, and spit his venomd malice through dirty kennels and low, unscrupulous instruments, until it reached and destroyed its victim. Oh! beware, beware, my friends, of giving the slightest aid to calumny. Beware of a slanderous tongue, for "it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison."

This principle is rife in the political operations of our day, and I am not disposed to shield any party from the charge. Let a candidate be set up for some popular office—he may be pure and spotless as the chaste moon, but he surely becomes the target for ten thousand arrows. Achilles was invulnerable except in his heel. The political candidate must be dipped in Styx more thoroughly than the son of Thetis, or the unguarded spot in

his reputation will become riddled into one gaping wound. Now I know not by what rule of ethics it can be established that morality in politics is different from morality in anything else. Men, I am persuaded, who would not give currency to a calumny against a private citizen, will circulate by pen and tongue the most bitter slanders against a public candidate. It surely is shamefully derogatory to the character of a free and enlightened people, to have our elections carried on by the bandying of slanderous accusations and contradictory affidavits. If reason, and the will of the people's great heart, and patriotism, and love of order and morality, are not strong enough among us to secure our well-government and the safety of our interests, and to prevent these shameful agitations—come, iron-handed Cromwell, and prorogue our popular assemblies at once!—come, armed Napoleon, and change our institutions for the purple, the bayonet, and the throne! But I believe that there is intelligence, and free, generous thought, and morality enough among us to check this slanderous mode of political warfare, and these outbreaks of popular passion. And let it be done! For the honor and the safety of our country, let it be done! In our political conflicts let *character* ever be as sacred as it is in the circle of home, the warehouse, or the mart.

I will not dwell here upon religious slanders.

Suffice it to say, that it is wrong, deeply wrong, to deprive your neighbor of his character—to hold him up to the suspicion and the reproach of community—to excite popular prejudice against him, because he differs from you in religious opinion. It is as foreign to the spirit of Christianity as it is false in morality. Beware what names you call your neighbor, or what motives and acts you attribute to him, merely in a temper of misrepresentation or sectarian prejudice.

There is one more subject closely connected with this topic of slander. I allude to that gossiping kind of chat well known by the term scandal. It is far too common, my friends, to make the sayings, the doings, the manners and the dress of others, the subjects of scathing criticism, and severe or light remark. We go to a church, and, it would seem, instead of being occupied with the thoughts and services that should engage us there, we are noticing the conduct of this one, or the garb and appearance of that; and we retire to comment upon these, instead of reflecting and resolving upon what we have or *might* have heard. Now, aside from the deep sin of this conduct, so far as a disregard of the Sabbath and the sanctuary is concerned, aside from this, and it is sin enough; we commit the wrong of employing ourselves in ill-natured remark and unjust criticism upon our neighbors. And so is it

when we meet with others in the circles of social life, when we pass them in the street, or encounter them at the public assembly. It is too common to indulge in this free criticism, and this unjust, unguarded comment. Now, whenever we come together, let it not be to decry and to misjudge our neighbors—for in this we often deeply wrong them, we foster evil feelings, and we are liable to set in motion a train that may end in downright slander and positive injury.

In all the connections of social life, see that you keep a strict guard upon the tongue. See that slander does not escape your lips, in any degree. You know the fatal effects of this principle. You know the inherent guilt of such a course of conduct. Regard dearly the rights and the reputation of others. Remember that it is for you to check yourself, if you have been in any way guilty in this matter—and remember that a slanderous tongue “is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”

II. Another evil habit which the tongue frequently maintains, is *Profanity*. Perhaps there is no vice more common than this. Men who would shudder at the thought of circulating a slander, and fairly sicken at the idea of uttering a falsehood, will still employ oaths and

curses. Now, I do not know what scale such may measure by, but if they take the great moral Law, they will find that profanity is no less a sin, than calumny or lying. It is useless for us, my friends, to blind ourselves to this truth. I am not speaking of the opinions of society—I am not considering how men regard these things; but I say, weighed and tested by the law of the Bible, profanity is as deep a transgression as slander or falsehood. When the trumpet-blast rent the darkling cloud, and the thunder shook the rocks of Sinai, did not this announcement come forth—“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain”?—and what length of habit, what custom of society, shall weaken the strong force of this law, or, because it is fashionable and used by *honorable* men, make profanity right and sinless? And did not Jesus Christ exhibit the full scope and meaning of this command, when he said—“Swear not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: neither by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King: neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black; but let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil?”

And because you are upright in your dealings with your fellow-men, and respected as a citizen, can these give you a license to disregard this teaching?

The law of God, then, the highest and the only standard of morality, condemns the habit of profane swearing, and no one who does this can be guiltless. But if this law did not exist, I would ask, what policy, what gain, is there in profanity? Does it beautify language? Is there anything sweet and refined in a discourse interlarded with oaths? Does it strengthen an assertion? If you are an honest man, you will be believed without profanity, and if you are not, all your oaths will not make you so. Does it give a peculiar force and energy to conversation? That conversation must be sadly lacking in the elements of stability and consistency that needs to be linked together by curses. I cannot, for my part, see the use or the wisdom of swearing, even if it were guiltless. And yet, my friends, useless, and unwise, and sinful as it is, this is a common practice. You shall not walk the length of yon street without having your ear saluted with oaths, perhaps blasphemies. Hoary old age, tottering on the verge of the grave, will call with a passionate voice upon the dread name of its Maker; and stammering children will make oath by their Father in

Heaven, before they have learned to know Him—catching their curses from paternal lips.

Surely, surely this should not be. I beseech you, seriously consider the matter.. Are you in the habit of profane swearing? Why do you do so? Do you say you have fallen into the practice, and long habit has so strengthened it that you find it difficult to break off, even when you would? I know that custom does much, and even when we loathe and abhor the habit into which we have fallen, we find it ever and anon breaking in upon our better resolutions. And, I doubt not, there are those who have become so accustomed to profanity, that they frequently, perhaps commonly, swear unconsciously. But now look at the whole amount of this apology. It is just this—we have so long been in the habit of committing a sin, that we cannot leave off sinning. Is this valid? Grant that you cannot leave off to-day, or to-morrow, you can *begin* to leave off, this hour. But the general course, I am afraid, is, that those who make this apology use it as an excuse for continuing in profanity. “We cannot break ourselves of swearing, therefore we will continue to be profane.” And do you really believe this? Do you believe that you could not break from this evil habit of the tongue, if you were to *try*? Now, if you will begin to *try* to

leave it off, and still find, now and then, this old custom slipping through your watch and uttering itself in an oath, use this apology as the reason why you do not immediately and totally abandon it—it may be of some force then. But if you say that you cannot leave off swearing, and never *try* to leave it off—or if you never do, after trial, leave it off—let me tell you, that your conscience and the moral law both condemn you, and you *know* it.

My friends, let me appeal to your better feelings and motives in this matter. Is it right to be profane? Is it right to take the name of that mighty Being who rules the universe, and whose glory pervades all existence—is it right to take His name, and make it the light word of mockery for a jest or a denunciation—to breathe it in unholy laughter above the wine cup, or utter it in passionate madness when you are angry? Is it right, say, is it right, to thus lightly treat that Father of ours, who gives us all that we enjoy?—to profane His blessed name who does so much for us? You would not suffer it to be done so with an earthly parent. He that should take the name of your father or your mother upon light lips—that should bandy it irreverently in the social circle or the street—that should use it in the lightest conversation and the lowest jests—

you would call to an account for his insults, and would treat with indignation. But here is your Father in heaven—his name is thus used and lightly treated, and passed in profanity from lip to lip—and you give no rebuke. Give no rebuke! Nay, you join in the evil. You also profane his name, without scruple and without compunction. Is this right? No! your conscience and your heart answer, “No!” Let me entreat you, then, to yield now to this conviction. Resolve that from this moment you will leave off profanity. And if you find it breaking in upon you, do not cease to strive against it. Subdue this evil practice of the tongue. It is useless, unwise, ungrateful, sinful. Let each one ask himself—“Am I guilty in this matter?”—“Have I ever profaned my Father’s holy name?”—and as his conscience answers, so let him act.

I would that this sin might be stayed in community. It is an abuse of the faculty of speech. It mars conversation—shocks piety—begets lightness and indifference—is foolish and sinful. This is an evil each one must correct for himself—an evil that should be checked at once—“an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”

III. I will mention one more evil way in which the tongue is often employed—*Falsehood*.

This is, perhaps, not so common a vice as the last, because the conventional standard of honor denounces it, and the known liar loses *caste* in the most worldly society. Yet, possibly, it is more prevalent and deeper seated than many are apt to imagine. Let us ask and answer a plain question. What is a falsehood? It is anything signified with the intent to deceive. Now, this is an easy test to try by. You will see that it matters not what form of words you use—it matters not that you have avoided just this or that expression, or shuffled off a plain declaration by some wretched quibble or pun—all this matters not; you have only this question to ask, and abide by the response of conscience—"Did I tell this with an intent to deceive?" On the other hand, it is possible that many prescribe to themselves too nice bounds in this matter. When they do so, they will be very apt to escape from the extreme rigor of the rule which they have laid upon themselves, by these very shifts and quibbles of which we have spoken. We cannot suppose that every figure of speech is a falsehood. We cannot call every metaphor or hyperbole a lie. If we do, we shall convict even the Bible itself of untruth. But we must avoid the utterance of anything calculated to deceive, or the habit of lightly exaggerating or untruly describing may

gradually beget in us a want of the clear distinction of truth from falsehood, and an aptitude to lessen the value of the one and disregard the heinousness of the other.

I am not going here into subtle casuistry about truth and falsehood. I am not going to discuss the morality of Paley, or the strictness of Opie. I wish to lay down a broad rule of conduct in this matter, that I would have every one adopt as an immutable principle, never to be swerved from. And that is—always regard truth in such a manner, as that you shall despise falsehood; and make it your glory to cling to open, frank, sincere communication with your fellow-men. No shuffling, no creeping around the matter, no quieting conscience with sophistical anodynes, and the dangerous maxim—"the end justifies the means."

There may be, I must confess, instances conjured up in supposition, when the strictly truth-loving man would be induced to say, "How shall I act? shall I commit a greater evil in order to avoid a less?" But, my friends, remember this one thing—these instances are extremely, *extremely* rare. At such a time, reflect—ask for aid of Him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not; and may you be taught and guided.

But we are speaking of the usual communica-

tions of life. Is not *truth* often sacrificed in these by many who would shrink from telling what they call an open lie, and who would feel highly indignant at the charge of falsehood? For my part, my friends, I am not able to discern that wide difference in color, said by some to exist among untruths, whereby one is called a black and one a white lie. True, there are falsehoods of different degrees of malignity—more or less important in their immediate results, and told under different circumstances. Still, a lie is a lie; and a lie is black, whiten it as you will. The principle is the same; and let none flatter themselves that there is palliation for them by the strict law of morality, arising from any such fictitious consideration, as that they have told a *little* instead of a big, a white instead of a black lie. If they have not spoken fairly and truly, they have told a falsehood—and so let conscience answer. It is by making these distinctions without a difference, that, as I have said, falsehood may be more prevalent and deeper seated than many are apt to imagine. Let us take a trite instance—the fashionable answer to an unwelcome visitor—“Not at home;” when the person inquired for is, at that very moment, leaning over the stairway, or peering from a chamber window. “Now,” argues that person, “I have not told a falsehood;”

I only meant, not at home *to that visitor.*" Ay a very important addition this, that would have changed entirely the idea with which that visitor went away from your door. Had you said that you was not at home "*to him,*" or "*to her,*" then the understanding would have distinctly been, that the contemplated visit was not agreeable to you ; but now the idea conveyed, *and which you meant to have conveyed,* is that you are not at home. You gave this announcement *with the intent to deceive.* "But," you may say, "this is a mode of declining a visit used by courtesy, instead of the harsher expression 'I do not wish to see you.'" Very well, if this is understood by the other party, then the words in the phrase "not at home" have lost their primary and assumed a conventional meaning, and are used and interpreted accordingly. But you must see to it that the *other party* assuredly understands by these words that you decline the visit, and not that you are actually from home, or no art will screen you from the charge of downright falsehood. For it is just as untrue to say that you are not at home when you *are*, as to describe white as black or light as darkness.

This may serve to illustrate other modes of suppressing or overleaping the truth, known under the names of "white lies," "mental reser

vations," etc. They will all, when subjected to strict analysis, resolve into sheer, downright falsehoods; and so let them be regarded.

I trust that you will avoid this abuse of the tongue. Never let it be the medium of a wilfully false communication. It would seem that policy, if no higher motive, would induce a man to abstain from this vice. As soon as it becomes known that he is a liar, all confidence in him is lost—we can trust him no more. And this distrust is based upon a conservative principle. If falsehood were allowed to run respectably at large, we should soon loosen the bands of social order. There would be no calculation upon integrity. Mutual trust and mutual obligation would be broken, and public faith and credit reduced to chaos.

So, from a consideration of social and moral laws, from conscientious and from prudential motives, beware of untruth. Beware of it in all, even its slightest forms. Desist from it. Put it by with loathing. It "is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison."

I might enlarge upon another evil habit of the tongue—that of speaking too much—of being a loud and incessant talker. Such a person can think but little, comparatively; and it is in the silence of meditation that great ideas are born,

and glorious discoveries made. A constant talker too, is apt to say much that is foolish, much that is hurtful, much that is sinful. Guard against this evil. Use the great gift of speech freely, properly sociably—but do not abuse it.

I have thus enumerated some of the evil ways in which the tongue is employed. In these we see that its power is great—that it may indeed “set on fire the course of nature,” and operate as if it were “set on fire of hell.”

Let me, then, from the subjects presented, urge you to a strict government of the tongue. And in order to this, remember particularly one thing,—the tongue is but the agent or interpreter of the *heart*. In order that the tongue should be right, the heart must be right. The slander, the oath the lie, spring originally from that prime fountain of thought and action. Oh! then, my friends, let your *hearts* be right—let them be moved by love to God, love to man, and the evil of the tongue will be quenched. In enjoining upon you to govern the tongue, I only say, in other words, govern the heart. The tongue would be tuneless forever were it not for the crowding, burning thoughts that arise and stir within. “Out of the same mouth,” says James, “proceedeth blessing and cursing.” And so it often is. We

have no fixed principle within us, shedding its pure light, and engendering its high and holy motives in the soul; and so, when temptation snares us—when there sweeps over our spirits a gust of passion, or an impulse of deceit—we make the tongue to utter its wicked words, and perform its evil agencies. But let the *heart* be pure and calm—let Jesus reign and grace triumph therein—and the tongue will utter only blessings, and words of good import, and prayer and praise.

I spoke, in the commencement, of the rich gift of speech. How nobly it *has* been employed! It has been uplifted by the homes of patriotism, and aroused the heart, and nerved the arm to strike for hearth and altar. It has gushed out in the sweet tones of love, and stirred the fountains of pure affection. It has kindled in the burning strains of the orator—it has poured the melody of the poet—it has spoken in the clear tones of reason and of justice. It has performed a mission for religion too, uttering words of mercy for the despairing, breathing consolation by the bed of the dying, calling back the prodigal from his wanderings, and falling on the troubled soul like whispers from the land of angels. Such things has the tongue achieved; and is it not sad, then, to think how polluted, how depraved, how sinful it has often been? Think of it, think of it! Think

of the evils caused in the world just by the sins of speech, and then remember that, had the human heart been right, this would never have been. In order to carry out my injunctions, you must go deeper than the frame-work of a formal, worldly virtue. You must go down and probe the heart—you must make all pure and holy there. How will you do it? By repentance, by faith, by God's grace assisting you, by a life of holiness—a life carried out in imitation of Jesus Christ.

Will you not begin now, then, to lead this life?—to make this repentance?—to cultivate this faith?—to secure this grace? Do so, do so, and your speech on earth shall be pure and blessed. Your words shall drop like dew. You shall pass on through your pilgrimage with songs; and when this “harp of a thousand strings” shall lie tuneless and crushed, and this vocal tongue be “silent in the grave,” your spirits, clothed with a new power of utterance, shall pass up, and sing before the Throne.

DISCOURSE VI.

THE HEAVENLY STATE CONTRASTED WITH THE EARTHLY.

REVELATION xxii. 5.—And there shall be no night there.

NIGHT is the season of silence and repose. With the day, sink the feverish heat, the busy tumult, the care, the toil, and the strife of existence. Lying down, we become unconscious even of the beating of our own hearts, we sleep engirt with shadows, and all the moving round of life is sealed out from our vision, or enters only in the broken and incongruous imagery of dreams. And it is a blessed boon, that for tempted, troubled, wearied human nature there is a time of rest. It refreshes with a kind hand this mortal body, bowed with its many burdens, and it has a gentle mission for the strained and aching chords of the spirit. *They* may not need the night's calm rest—the dwellers in yonder worlds, that through all its hours keep their bright watch above us;—*they* may not feel its tender ministry who “sleep the dreamless sleep” beneath. But for us, the dwellers of this world, weeping, bleeding, faint-

ing in its conflicts—tired and worn with its toils—sickening with its griefs or its pleasures,—like a dear mother, it takes us to its arms, and lulls us into peace, and makes us strong again.

How peaceful and soothing are its hours! Labor has laid aside the implements of its toil; the fire is smouldering in the forge; the sickle hangs idle on the wall, and the hammer and the axe lie still by the unfinished work. The lights have gone out from the dwellings, the hum has ceased on the pavements, and the world's deep shadow is only braided with glimmerings of the sleepless stars. Like the grave, night has made all equal. The brawny arm of the strong man rests as powerless as that of the tiny infant that slumbers at his side. Wealth has laid by its costly robes, and the poor man's dreams are as glad and free. The beggar on his rick of straw is a king, and the king beneath his gorgeous canopy is a beggar. The passions of Ambition brood in its heart as still as the pulses of the humblest laborer, and Genius babbles its broken visions like the very idiot. Humanity, grief-worn, passion-tossed, labor-wearied, needs rest—and rest has been bestowed. A blessed boon, we say again, is the night, for the tired body, the earth-worn spirit, the tried and the tempted—that they may lay them down in slumber, forgetful of all, and find rest.

But these griefs and trials are only of earth. Beyond the grave—in heaven—they will not come to weary and perplex. What mode of existence we shall have when this mortal drapery is put off and we pass into the realities of another world, we cannot tell. That we shall exist independent of all manner of organization, we think doubtful. That the spirit may have *eyes* to see and *ears* to hear the glories that shall gush in upon it, is neither inconsistent with reason or with Scripture. Paul says that “there is a spiritual *body*,” that shall be raised in incorruption, and glory, and power. Christ rose from the sepulchre with a *body*—he stood on the mount of transfiguration apparently in a material form. His *countenance* was there, although “altered,” and he had *raiment*, although it was “*white* and *glistering*.” The truth is, we think that heaven will consist more in the freedom and purity of the soul, than in the *mode* of its future existence, or the circumstances with which it will be surrounded. The spirit is a deathless and exhaustless principle within us—this we know; but how it shall continue to abide—upon what and through what it shall hereafter act—is one of the mysteries that we cannot behold with this mortal “glass through which we see darkly.” That we shall have some kind of organization, is quite probable.

That we shall be limited in our resources and our power, developing as we go on from one stage of progress to another, is just as probable. If so, then there may be circumstances that will call for repose even there, and there may be physical conditions in the worlds in which we shall be placed that will produce the regular rotation of day and night. Now we admit all this to be very speculative; but what we would enforce by it is the idea that, allowing the text to refer to heaven hereafter, when we consider its highly figurative connection, it may not refer to literal night, and may be taken figuratively. And I have entered into this train of reasoning in order that I may not be understood as saying that *literally* there shall be no night, or nothing, in any degree, in our natures to require it. Equally far am I from asserting that there will be. This is left for the future and the immortal. But this we may say, that causes that perplex us now, and weary us, and make us weak and faint, will there be no more, and, therefore, to heal troubles like these "there shall be no more night." They will not exist, and rest *from* them, therefore, will not be needed. So here we have a contrast between the state of heaven and that of this earth. There shall be no more night for *sorrow*, for sorrow will not be there. There shall be no more night for *sin*, for

sin cannot enter the crystal gates. There shall be no more night for *evil passions*, for they do not dwell by those clear waters of the paradise of God. Redeemed, happy, holy—lifting up their brows in everlasting glory, robed in perpetual beauty, the blessed ones shall walk those “sweet fields,” and recline by those glad rivers—“And there shall be no night there.” Let us look more in detail at some of the contrasts between the heavenly and the earthly state.

I. Night, then, is not only a time for repose and silence, but it is also a time when *sorrow* has its keenest agony, and pours its bitterest lament. There are those to whose eyelids this season does not always bring sleep—who keep painful vigils, even with groans and tears. The bustle and variety of the day may draw away the mind from its grief, and, engaging its powers in divers trains of thought and action, may for the while cause it to forget. But when the light has fled—when the beauty of the outward world is veiled, and the communion of social life is broken for a time—the spirit is left to itself, and driven in upon its own thoughts. And then the mourning ones tear open their wounds afresh, and people that vacant solitude with sad memories and painful forebodings. They reflect again upon what they feel, and what they have lost.

It is a time for the poor man to realize his poverty. As he looks upon the wan faces sleeping around him—as he ponders his seasons of burdensome toil, his hours of fruitless labor, his disappointed hopes; the bravery and energy that the excitement of the day gave him, sink before the desolation of the present, the experience of the past, and the chill aspect of the future.

It is a time for the stranger and wanderer to feel his loneliness. He has not been alone through the hours of light. Although isolated among his fellows, he enjoyed the communion and the sympathy of nature. The blessed world smiled upon him like the face of a friend, and he felt as if its varied sounds were familiar voices, and music for his heart. But now, the sun has gone down. The clouds have lost their gorgeous draperies. The last ray of light has faded from the earth. And thoughts of his desolation stalk out from the grim shadows of the night. The memories of other years, of home, and warm hearts and kind hands far away, that know not of the forlorn condition of the tempest-tossed pilgrim, all press in upon him, and fill his eyes with sad and bitter tears.

It is a time for the bereaved to miss more deeply their lost but cherished dead. The forms of life, and the life-like occupations, that for a time have attracted the memory and the soul, are now

all gone. The deserted room, the vacant chair, the empty garment, are now all before them ; and the sweet faces of the loved and buried rise upon their swimming vision. The silence is filled with music-voices of the past. The hand is clasped by hands that are now, oh ! so still and cold : and when the dear delusion is all around them, like a sweet though mournful charm, they start—and the spell is broken ;—the streams of the heart, that had gushed in sweet though melancholy dreams, flow back to sting the deep wounds there anew with memories from the grave. How many a mourner, in the reveries of the night-season, has felt the truth of the poet's verse !

‘ With a slow and noiseless footstep,
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me,
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars so still and saint-like,
Looking downwards from the skies.

How many in contemplative fancy have felt all this, and then seen it melt away—and then, *then*, have realized in the shadow, and silence, and deep loneliness of the night, the void that is left in the heart—the desolation that has come upon the life ! Sorrow, then, has its keen sway peculiarly at

night. Tears, like the dew, fall in darkness ; and though, like the dew, perhaps, bestowing on the morrow a living freshness and a peace, yet, in the hour of their issuing from the heart's cold urn, wearing yet deeper the traces of its grief, and disturbing the ashes of its buried hopes—revealing in the loneliness of night the blank reality of destitution, and abstracting the mind from the scenes of the day to muse upon its inward cares and woes.

But—there shall be no night *there*. No night of grief—no night of wounding sorrow—

“His own soft hand shall wipe the tears
From every weeping eye.”

The groan of anguish and the sigh of despair shall be swallowed up in music. The soul of man seeks such a rest. The courage that enables us to bear with resignation the storms and changes of our earthly existence, derives much of its power from the hope that we have of final peace. The mariner who still wears his ship and clings to his helm, though the masts are shattered, the sails torn, and the vessel aleak, does so because he hopes yet to make the port, or that some friendly mariner, some daring life-boat, will discover his distress and haste to his succor. But let the hope of this deliverance desert him—let him sit down

in despair, his mind made up to meet the worst and to find his tomb below the waves; and he clings to the helm and wears the ship no longer—it rocks among the billows and drifts before the winds, “a shorn and naked wreck.” So is it in life. We still cling to faith, and duty, and existence, strengthened by the hope of a final rest—of reaching the eternal port of heaven; and if it were not for this, I know not where many aching heads and aching hearts would find their balm.

It must be a flinty philosophy indeed that can adopt the cheerless idea of annihilation; that can see every hope perish around it—friends that it loves go down to the grave; and keep on through life, struggling and sickening, and sit down at last upon the threshold of the tomb, without one ray of a life hereafter—without one thought to brighten the deep shadow of that sepulchre, that we shall find that this high nature was not given us only to be grief-worn and depressed, but that, trained and purified by its earthly conflicts, it shall issue in a new existence, where care and grief shall never come, and there shall be nothing to mar, or separate, or crush;—I say he must be a flinty philosopher who can brave the changes of existence without such a hope, and finally, like the old sage, wrap himself in his mantle, and sit him down in apathy, to die. The death-bed of

the Christian is a calm one—the atmosphere of angels, filled with a holy peace, is around him—and yet his is not the calmness of apathy, of callous indifference. His parting spirit, as it breaks its earth-born tethers, thrills with a lively joy, and the light that falls upon his pale, wan face is from the hope of resting, free from these human toils, these mighty conflicts, these rending griefs, in a land where there shall be no more night.

The soul of man, then, appears to require a final rest. The idea cheers it and nerves it up amid the fiercest trials of life, and gives it a sustaining and triumphant faith in death. And this requirement of the soul is answered. There is a rest for it from the pangs of sorrow. It shall be buffeted no more when it goes up in the calm regions above. Cold hands shall not come there to tear its dearest ties. Poverty shall not bring its keen deprivations. The lonely shall meet their loved and their gentle ones. And they shall sit down together and rejoice. They shall drink of clear waters unmingled with bitterness. They shall hear sweet music that has no discord. They shall gather flowers that will never be blighted. “And there shall be no night there.”

II. But, again;—night is a peculiar season

for *Pain*. The sick man feels a deeper restlessness and agony in its silent watches. The minutes wear away with a torturing slowness, and he longs for the hour when he shall not see only the wan light of the taper, but when the fresh morning air and the bright morning sun shall break in upon him. But slowly, slowly wears the night—abstracting the mind, now that it hears no pleasant voices and sees no cheerful sights, to contemplate its weakness and agony. “The death-like images of the dark” start forth, and the oppression of despair weighs upon the faint and feeble heart. The fever comes in upon his troubled vision, and urges him to dream of cool, deep waters in the desert, that fly from his parched lips; and he awakes to grapple with the hot air, and the trembling shadows on the wall, or to sleep again convulsively, and without rest. Oh! how full of agony to the sick man is the night. How longs he for the day, when he can see and hear the movings of glad and happy life—the assurances that he is yet hopefully among the living—the cheering influences of the sun, the fresh air, and the flowers! And then, too, the watchers,—loving, faithful, true. With what pain do they witness the convulsions of his brow, the faint, inarticulate moaning, the working of his parched lips! How ghastly and wan their faces

look by the light of that dim lamp, as they bend over him with the healing liquid, or smooth his hot pillow with gentle hands, or start at his slightest motion! or, with muffled feet, and finger on lip, and holding almost the very breath, they watch his first, blest sleep.

So the night is a peculiar time for *Pain*. It hears many groans that the day does not. The sick one and the sick one's friends suffer peculiar anguish then, that the light and voices of the morning will dispel, but that will return with the darkness. In halls and huts there is pain at night—there are groans that come up from the homes of the rich and of the lowly poor, from prisons and hospitals, and “pierce its dull ear.”

But *Pain* is not of heaven. “There shall be no night there;” no night of sickness—no night of sad and feverish watching. There shall be no weepers there by troubled couches—there shall be no hot moments of mortal agony. Our earthly lot is mortal. Our human organization is liable to decay. Life is short, and sometimes but a comparatively small portion of its years is free from pain and sickness. We walk on a little while with the bloom of health in the cheek, and the light of happiness in the eye. Then the bloom fades, the light goes out, we are stretched upon beds of pain; we recover, perhaps,

and are laid there again and yet again ; we totter feebly on a few more years, and then sink into the grave. This is often the lot of human beings. But however individual experience may prove, we all suffer, more or less, the liabilities of our common nature. If we were to live nowhere beyond this earth—if the tomb were to close upon us forever—we might deeply wonder at this ; but it is not so. When we consider the grave as a passage to another state of existence, we shall see a wise provision of Providence, in preparing us for that passage by premonitory hints and forewarnings, which come to disturb our complete absorption in the things of this earth, and to remind us that that passage must be trodden. Every pang of agony, every stroke of sickness, may be said to be a premonition. It reminds us that we are not cased in an ever-enduring tabernacle ; but that, one by one, its chords wear away and its functions lose their tone ; and we begin to think it

“ Strange that a harp of thousand strings
Should keep in tune so long.”

So we may say, perhaps, that death does not generally come without a personal forewarning—not only by the teachings of wisdom and experience, learned from others ; but by pains, and aches, and fever-fits, to which we are all more or

less liable, that bid us remember that there is another world in which we are to dwell, and that these earthly integuments will soon fail us altogether. Death must come, or this earth would be crowded by ever advancing generations. There must be a place for active life to move upon, and it is prepared above the great thronged channel-house of the dead. The condition, then, of our earthly nature—its necessary circumstances, arising from things as they are—make pain and sickness attendants of our lot.

But in heaven—in the bright state above—is immortality. There are no graves there. The “many mansions” of our “Father’s House” are spacious enough to accommodate all existences, and one will not intrude upon another. So, *there* will be no wasting bloom, no fading life, no agony, no fever. They are deathless fountains that flow in the angel-land—leaves of immortal greenness bend and quiver there. No groans, no achings, no weary watchings, for those who arrive at Home. They will embrace dear friends who have gone before them, but they will not see the wan faces that those friends wore when they gazed upon them last—they will be all fresh and radiant beneath their sparkling crowns. They will not clasp the loved who come after them with such feeble, clammy hands as when they bade them

farewell. Disease, and cruelty, and casualty, and war, will not be there to inflict pain. There will be no sickness—there will be grieving for the sick no more. “And there shall be no night there.”

III. But, once more ;—night is a peculiar season for *Sin*. The Bible tells us that he who doeth evil loveth the darkness. It is a covering for guilt and vice to work under. No eye can see them that they would not—save One, of which, perhaps, they little think ; and they go forth to their plottings and their evil orgies. Drunkenness, licentiousness, crime, seek then “their rank dens of shame.” Then the coarse jest, the fearful oath, the riotous laugh break out. Then it is that widowed hearts are mourning for a dear son, an only brother, a still loved husband, who are reeling in their debauchery—who have left their hearths cold, their babes starving, their wives, and sisters, and mothers broken-hearted. Then it is that faces that were once innocent and beautiful are flushed with intemperance, and covered with long, streaming hair loosened in guilty riot. Then it is that murder sharpens its keen knife and curses the very stars, and theft prowls about with its dark lantern. Then it is that haggard faces bend over their whole fortunes staked

on the gaming-table. Then it is that shrieks come up from the midst of drunken strife, and the unwary traveller falls beneath the robber's weapon. Then it is that the brand of burning is applied, and property and life are sacrificed in the flaming pile. In short, night is sin's great season of carnival, when in all varied shapes—with all hideous masks and horrid antics and guilty excesses—its hosts assemble together. Then the miser counts his gold, and the assassin his victim's heart-drops. Then the burglar lays his plan, and the wicked schemer *his*. Then guilt triumphs over purity, and vice over virtue. Then revelry shouts next the very chamber of the dead, and mockery sneers on the face of the day-long hypocrite. Then temptation digs the grave of innocence, and death holds the torch. Then all these crowds of guilty realities live and move and mingle and swagger through the darkness.

But sin has no home in the kingdom of heaven. "There shall be no night *there*." No night for guilt, for riot, shame, and debauch. How calm, how holy the transition! How sweet the change from these impure regions of darkness and death, to that fair clime of peace and light!

One fundamental idea of heaven is freedom from sin. This is all-essential to true enjoyment, here or hereafter. Sin, then, cannot come near

the throne, or enter the new Jerusalem. There is a difference between intellectual and moral *imperfection*, and a life of guilt. The one is a state of actual transgression—the other may be one stage of right development, from which it is possible to *advance* to other and higher stages. The idea that heaven is a state of complete repose, without action or advancement, we deem an incorrect one. It may be supposed to be a state of vigorous and lofty action. And it is quite probable that the motive to this action will be the idea of progress and improvement. If there are progress and improvement to be made hereafter, of course that very fact presupposes a state of intellectual and moral imperfection that may be progressed from and improved upon. If we are *perfect*, in the proper sense of that term, we cannot *improve*, or *progress*. But we may be free from sin, free from unrighteous action, and yet not perfectly wise and holy. We may turn from *one* path and walk in *another*, and yet, being free from the path which we have left, we may not have reached the *end* of that upon which we have entered. So, in saying that we shall *sin* no more, I do not say that we shall *improve* no more. World after world, system beyond system, may be as golden ladders of an eternal and infinite progress. But, speculative as this is, this

we say—there is no sin in heaven. Crime, licentiousness, debauchery—the evil thought and the evil deed—have no sway there. The soul shall rest in peace from them. The tears that they have caused, the sighs, the groans, shall be no more. Blood-washed are the robes that the redeemed shall wear—pure are the spirits that enter the heavenly gate. Calm and happy shall they look, when they come up from their tribulation. *There* shall be sweet voices, glad music, triumphant songs—but no sin. “There shall be no night there.”

IV. Again;—night is peculiarly a time for *Remorse*. In the roar and rush and busy tumult of the day, the commission of sin is, comparatively, unreflected upon, and the voice of conscience is smothered. But at night, still, clear, profound, we can hear the very beatings of the pulse, and it seems as if forms invisible were brooding around, listening to the inward accusations of the heart. Oh! for hands that are reeking with blood—for souls that are stained with crime, how awful is the night! The dagger that led to murder hovers in airy vision before them—the Banquo ghosts, that will not down, start up around them; and on the hand darkens that little spot, that “all the perfumes of Araby will not sweeten.”

But it is not only for the guilt of deep, polluting crime that night is a season of remorse. It is terrible for this. Poets have traced with thrilling power the workings of the brow, the beaded sweat, the starting from ghastly dreams, when at this hour conscience rouses up its deep, tremendous hell within.

But a remorse, if not so violent as this, yet deep and bitter, will, in the season of night, naturally come over the soul of any one who reflects upon the sins and the errors of frail human nature. The day has passed. Its sounds are hushed—its glare and show have faded away. We look back, in this hour so fit for musing, upon the past. What transgressions rise up before us! what sins of omission and of commission! How many times, even in the brief portion of the twenty-four hours just fled, have we wandered from God and from duty! How often have we yielded to evil passion! How many sinful thoughts have we indulged! How many actions that conscience, in its strict impartiality, assures us were really wrong, have we committed! How many good deeds that we might have done have we failed to do! How many good resolutions have we broken! How many fitful gusts of impulse have driven us along! How much time, and talent, and opportunity, have we wasted, or

worse than wasted ! But the catalogue swells in upon us. And all this, it is likely, in one short day !—how much more in the course of a life ! And still God's law has been in our hands, and Christ's pure precepts of duty—and we have heeded them not ! Oh ! as these thoughts accumulate and accuse us—as we think of the goodness of God, still never failing—the love of Christ, still ever calling us—is not the night a season for remorse, for contrition, for lamentations over our various and many follies, and for bitter, gushing tears ?

But, as there is no sin in heaven, there will be no remorse. So, “there shall be no night there.” No night for guilty memories—no night for wounded, accusing conscience. The sweet thought of pardon—the happy consciousness of reconciliation—will heal the sin-anguished soul. We shall not have to look back from time to time upon fatal lapses, upon grievous follies, upon temptations that have attacked and overwhelmed us. If it were so, surely the bliss of the future state would be marred, and in our spiritual existence we should feel as we do while we are “of the earth, earthy.” How sweet to tried, tossed, tempted souls the thought that they shall be tried, tossed, tempted no more, and have no more to weep over sin and error and neglect ! Yet so will it be. “There shall be no night there.”

V. But, *finally* ;—there is a night, which, although it depend not upon the revolutions of this earth about the sun, or the precise measure of hours—for it comes at all seasons—is yet a *night*, and may properly be spoken of here as such. It is the night of death—the shadow that broods over the regions of the grave. Yes, our nights here may be seasons of sorrow, of sickness, of sin, of remorse, or they may not ; but this night of death will come upon us all. No earthly sun can dispel its shadows—no earthly morrow shall ever break upon it. How many have sunk to slumber in the arms of this night ! How many that we knew, and trusted, and loved ! How sadly have we kissed their cold, cold lips, and laid them in their lowly graves ! How suddenly, too, they went from us ! Like leaves in the midst of summer, like flowers in the sunny spring, they drooped, and died ! And though the mourner smiles, and, as the world imagines, is happy ; perhaps there is a flood of grief, like waters in an urn, pent up even now in the heart, and the least touch—the vibration of the least chord of memory—shall make that heart to overflow.

This is a night, too, that has all hours for itself—that shadows the heaven even in the morning, or at noon. It wraps in its arms not only the gray and tottering old man—but the strong, the young,

the lovely. It strikes the cup of joy from the very lip—it crushes music on the very lyre—it quenches the flame on the very altar—and all is dark. Rich, poor, old, young, talented, ignorant, good, bad—it is a night that comes for all. It will come for us! It will roll on, and roll on, and gather in its embrace the generations of humanity!

But its triumph is confined to earth. It never enters heaven. “There shall be no night there.” No night of death—no night of the tomb. There are trophies hanging on those crystal walls, but they are not the trophies of earth’s great conqueror. They are the trophies of that Victor who conquered the conqueror—“who plucked the sting from death and robbed the grave of victory”—who trod its broken bars beneath his feet, and, “triumphant, passed the crystal ports of light.”

Heaven is a place for meeting, not for parting—for life, and not for death—and so there is no night there. Flowers that faded here bloom there forever—plants that drooped and died, live in unwithering green. That there shall be a recognition of friends in heaven, appears an important principle in that glad hope which is born of the doctrine of immortality. When they are laid in the grave, we speak of the great truth of “the

resurrection from the dead ” and “ the life eternal,” to the bereaved and mourning. But what is one soothing chord that we touch in that instance ? Is it not the hope of meeting again ?—and how can we meet again, in any proper sense of these words, unless we recognise each other, or bear about with us that by which we may recognise each other ? That we must know one another, appears to me plain, unless we lose all identity ; and then what is it to this thinking, acting *me* if I am raised, if all that made *ME* in this world is stripped away ? Nay, *I* could not, in that instance, rise at all—my *identity* gone, it would be another being.

But, meeting in heaven, we shall meet to part no more. We shall not see death there. We shall not mourn for the lovely and the lost. The Jordan passed over—the fields gained beyond “ the swelling flood ”—we shall not go back, to die again. The husband that mourned for a departed wife, will see her, there. The old man will clasp his son, there. And the mother, too, will see that little babe that she wept over with such fast and bitter tears, yet with faith.

“ The mother gave in tears and pain
The flowers she most did love,
She knew she would find them all again
In the fields of light above.

Oh ! not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day ;
'T was an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away."

Oh ! the joy of that heavenly meeting. Oh ! the joy of that eternal communion. Oh ! the joy of seeing Christ. Oh ! the joy of that worship around the throne, with "the white-vested elders" and the angels. And never to go away from that blessed place!—never to die! For "there shall be no night there."

With two remarks upon our subject we will close. We have been speaking of heaven. And by heaven we mean only the abode of the righteous—the good. I wish not to be misunderstood. Let it not be said, that I have represented heaven as a place wherein the bad, the guilty, the sin-stained enter, and sit with the blessed. Heaven is a holy clime, and they who enter heaven must be holy. I know of no class of Christians who hold that in heaven the vile shall mingle with the pure. Those who limit sin and its consequences to this life ever hold the idea, if I understand them, that guilt shall be washed away from every soul before it reaches the new Jerusalem. But, at the same time, I am willing to say, and deem it proper that I should, that I do not hold that

death destroys the effects of sin. The argument upon identity that I have employed above, it seems to me, naturally leads to this conclusion. If we look upon the soul as the seat of thought and motive, I can conceive that, even tabernacled in a body that is not liable to *physical* death, the soul can suffer the consequences of its guilt. It seems to me that in the future life there may be a distinction of good and bad. I have not, then, been stating the glories of heaven as the immediate possession of all at the end of this life. I have represented it as the true Christian's home—to which, in every storm and every peril, he may look with faith's clear vision, and be comforted and strengthened.

But, were I to pause here, I should lay myself open to misunderstanding on the other hand. It is at the position of *endless* punishment that I halt. Between endless and limited retribution in the future world there is an *infinite* difference. The arguments that support the one cannot be pressed into the service of the other. I would ask, then, those who hold the doctrine of endless punishment, can you reconcile it with your best ideas of heaven and immortality? What bright hope is it that bursts upon you, as you think of that region where there shall be no more night? Is it not that of meeting *all* the lost and the departed

there? Is there *one* around whom your heart-strings are twined with all the strong power of affection, that you can think of, as being absent from you forever? Ay, and more than this, not merely absent, but *suffering*? Mother, thou dost love that prodigal boy, notwithstanding all his ingratitude—notwithstanding he wrings thy heart with bitter agony. Do you not hope to see him return, to be reconciled and to love thee yet? Do you not think with agony, of all that he may be suffering in his mad career? And if it is so, that thou dost yearn for the absent here, will it not be so in eternity?—will not the happy souls still feel a void until all the lost ones shall come home? May not they be ministering spirits sent forth to bring them to virtue and to heaven—to perform an agency of reconciling a world, through Christ, to God? There is no night in heaven—shall *endless* night brood over any part of this great universe? Oh! will it not be that in the end there shall be no night at all?—no night for us—no night for those we love—the wandering and the lost? How bright is such an anticipation! From every world that rolls sweet music gushing out—on every crystal wall white robes and starry crowns; and over every radiant isle, and every glassy sea, over all the boundless universe, no night!

The other remark that I would make is this: We have taken the common ills of earth—sorrow, pain, guilt, remorse, and have contrasted them with the heavenly state. Our actions should correspond to this truth. It should have its proper effect upon us. It should make us live for heaven, if heaven has all this value. The future state is not for inactive, dreamy contemplation. Heaven begins here, as we begin to seek for it—to cultivate the soul; and heaven there is, as it were, but a continuation of this. Righteousness—following Christ that we may be like him—ever has been and ever will be the way, and the only way, to get to heaven. Raising our thoughts, then, as we have to-night, and dwelling upon the glories of the upper world, will avail us but little.—nay, will be but a bright dream—unless the *heart* is made better. The prospect of heaven will have its proper effect upon us when it excites in us a desire to dwell in heaven, and when, in turn, that desire excites us to right action, we shall begin to be in heaven. Oh! as you value heaven, I do beseech you, from this hour act upon this truth. Act, act!—live on earth *for* heaven—for that bright immortal state, where they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;—where they are before the throne of God, and serve him day

and night in his Temple, and He that sitteth on the throne dwelleth among them ;—where they hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters : and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. There shall be no night there !

DISCOURSE VII.

THE STILL SMALL VOICE.

1 KINGS XIX. 11, 12.—And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind was an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

THE circumstances connected with this sublime narration are briefly these: Ahab, the son of Omri, and the king of Israel, had married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians; and, in connection with his marriage, we are told that he “went and served Baal, and worshipped him,” and reared up an altar for him in a house which he had built in Samaria. This worship did Ahab, the sovereign of a people whose fathers were brought up in the knowledge of the one true God, whose law was specially committed to them, and whose miracles had been wrought, as it were, in their midst—this idolatrous worship did Ahab render. Elijah the Tishbite, a prophet of the Lord, had proclaimed the mandate of Jehovah, that there should be no rain nor dew for a

lapse of time, "and there was a sore famine in Samaria." "After many days," the prophet was commanded to show himself unto the king, and it was promised that there should be rain again upon the earth. In the mean time, Ahab had commanded Obadiah, the governor of his house, to "go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks;" to endeavor to find grass to save the horses and mules alive; and, apportioning out different routes of travel, the king went one way and Obadiah another. While the latter was on his journey, he met Elijah, who commanded him to tell Ahab of his presence in the land; to which Obadiah remonstrated, that if the prophet should not be in the appointed place when Ahab sought him, he would be slain. But upon the assurance of the prophet that he would be there, Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him. Upon the conference which ensued between Elijah and the king, the prophet tells him, that he had not troubled Israel, but him and his father's house, because they had forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed Baalim. "Now therefore send," says he, "and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table."

And there, on the summit of "the finest and

most beautiful mountain in Palestine," with Kishon flowing here, Tabor and Hermon rising there, the hills of Samaria in the distance, and the broad Mediterranean rolling beneath, stood in the majesty of truth that lone prophet of God, and addressed the congregated multitude—"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." And oh! with the glorious works of the living God rising and mantling around them, with an evidence of Him in every blue wave that rippled to the mountain's base, and in every tall hill that towered throne-like to the sky—with the memory of the wonder and glory of other days—of the Egyptian bondage and the desert miracles; does it not seem as if there were powerful, overwhelming inducements to decide them in their choice? But a more immediate sign was to be given. It was proposed that two bullocks should be selected, and cut in pieces, and laid on wood, with no fire beneath. "And call ye on the name of your gods," said the holy man—the only remaining prophet of God; "call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken." Accordingly, the prophets of the false deity took the

bullock which was given them and dressed it, and called on the name of their god—from the morning until the noon—"Oh Baal! hear us!" The mountain breeze bore on the sound, the rocks and caverns echoed it back—"but there was no voice, nor any that answered." They leaped up and down at the altar which they had made, and when the noon-tide came on, the voice of the prophet was heard in bitter mockery—"Cry aloud, for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." And loud went up the cries of those idol prophets, and red gushed the blood from the wounds of knife and lancet, and the mid-day passed, "and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice"—but "there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

And now was the time for the prophet of the living and true God. The people gathered around him—the altar of the Lord that was broken down he repaired, and took twelve stones, "the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob," and reared one in the name of Jehovah, and made a trench about the altar, and put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces and placed it upon the wood, and gave order to fill four barrels with water and pour it on the wood and on the

sacrifice, the second, yea, the third time—"until the water ran about the altar;" and he filled the trench also with water. And there, "at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice"—as the great sun was sinking to the sea and the murmuring breeze came up—as the attentive multitude, the eager and breathless people, and the disappointed prophets of the idol, stood in listening silence—there, at the side of that mountain-altar, went up the deep, earnest prayer of Elijah—'Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Here me, oh Lord, hear me; that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again.'

And then down rained the fire of heaven, consuming the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the dust, and licking up the water in the trench—and that vast multitude of people fell prostrate on their faces, and up rose their united shout, thrilling the dark woods, and echoing through the caverns, and pealing far over the sea—"The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

After this signal triumph of truth, the prophets of Baal were taken and brought down to the brook Kishon, and slain there by Elijah. The

promise of an abundance of rain was made to Ahab, and was fulfilled. But Jezebel, incensed at the prophet on account of the slaughter, threatened his life, and he arose and came to Beersheba, where he left his servant, and thence "went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die." Twice, while he was asleep there, the angel of the Lord came and touched him, and bade him partake of food prepared for him. He journeyed "in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights," to mount Horeb. Hither he came unto a cave and lodged, and the word of the Lord came to him and said—"What doest thou here, Elijah?" And he said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." And here follows the sublime description in our text.

There must have been, from the very nature of the case, something awfully sublime in the communications of Jehovah with the holy men of old. Even the mention of it calls up the emotion of sublimity. How different from the juggling mysteries of heathen priests, and the

fantastic wildness of the oracles! He made the elements, the wondrous principles of the great universe, to herald his approach. The cloud and the flame—the garnitures that hang beneath his throne—betokened his presence, and his voice came forth from the unsearchable depths. God communing with man! He, before whose radiant seat bright angels are impure—whose voice is the fiat of the universe—who hath his way in the whirlwind and the storm—Jehovah communing with man!—a creature of this far, dim orb! Sublime, awfully sublime, I repeat it, is the idea. And awfully sublime, indeed, was the communication of God with Moses upon Sinai—with the thick clouds, the thunderings, the trumpet-blasts, the smoke and the fire—when the leader of Israel went up and was answered by a voice—when the dread bounds of approach were set, and he drew near “unto the thick darkness where God was,” when his face shone with a strange brightness, and when the law was given.

And in our text we have another instance, blended with that which adds, if I may so speak, to its sublimity.

“Go forth,” was the mandate to the prophet, “and stand upon the mount before the Lord.” And, then, there came a mighty whirlwind, rush-

ing and shouting by, rending the tall mountains in its course, and shivering the solid rocks—but God was not in that great and strong wind—

“’T was but the whirlwind of his breath,
Announcing danger, wreck, and death.”

Again, and there was a heaving and billowy earthquake, and the high, bare, thunder-smitten pinnacles tottered upon their old foundations, and the deep-rooted mountains, with their yawning chasms, rocked, as it surged and plunged by;—but God was not in the earthquake—

“’T was but the rolling of his car,
The trampling of his steeds from far.”

Once more, and sheeted fire—quivering and glancing flame—flame, with its bright and terrible glory, illumining the naked mountain-sides and the deep defiles—went sweeping by;—but God was not in the flame—

“’T was but the terror of his eye,
That lighten’d through the troubled sky.”

These all passed on, and when there was a hush—when stillness and calm had fallen, there arose “a still small voice” on the prophet’s ear; and he wrapped his face in his mantle, and stood to listen.

This was that peculiar sublimity of which we spoke. All the usual manifestations of God's presence—the revelations of awful grandeur were there ; but God was not in these. It was when they were gone—when the tumult and the terror had ceased—that Elijah heard the words of the Lord, in “a still small voice.”

We will here take leave of the history, and proceed with some practical remarks upon the subject.

I. The consolations of religion, my hearers, are not found in the pursuits and bustle of the world. In a pause from these, or in retirement, we shall obtain a knowledge and use of those principles which will fit us to go on with the avocations and affairs of life—but we shall not gain them while we pursue these only, unprepared for the various changes and cares and modes of conduct attendant upon existence. In the whirlwind of passion, the earthquake that shakes empires, the flame of ambitious desire—we shall find no word of consolation, to nerve us for disappointment, to fit us for sorrow, and to bid us look calmly beyond the grave. The tide of worldly business, also, is a tumultuous and swift-rushing torrent, but “the waters of Shiloah

go softly." You understand my idea probably, but allow me to enlarge upon it.

Man, I believe, say and do what he will, is desirous for that calm and cheerful joy which only the principles of true religion can impart. He is ever seeking, restless and unsatisfied, until he imbibes these principles; and it is quite probable that, frequently, he does not know what troubles him. He looks up to the sky, and abroad upon the laughing face of earth, and there is an impression of happiness and purity and serene beauty, which he cannot comprehend, but which he feels is needed in the depths of his own soul; and from that soul go out ardent thoughts and deep aspirations for the holy and the true. Why is it that men in all ages have constructed systems of ethics, and pointed out something disconnected with the mere pursuits of every day—why is it that searchings for virtue, and endeavors after "the greatest good," have employed the minds of philosophers—why is it that bright dreams, like the ineffable region of the Gnostic, or the vision of Utopia, have flitted before the eye of the soul—if it be not that man has within him this yearning, to speak plainly, for religion?

This sentiment in humanity may be accounted for in various ways, but still it seems to me cer-

tain that the sentiment exists. Be it the faint memory of an early revelation, the natural effect of outward circumstances, or the operation of innate ideas—it still, from some cause, exists and works in the soul, and moves it on to seek for happiness and rest. I do not say that it always seeks for the holy and the true—it may do so when it discovers that to be the only true source of happiness; it does not always recognise the still small voice—but goes forth in the whirlwind, or commits its trust to the rushing torrent. I do not say that it always endeavors after the pure principle of religion; but I say that, either with knowledge or in ignorance of its object, the soul, it would seem, is ever seeking for happiness and peace.

Why does the warrior pass through burning sands and Alpine snows, and seek *Fame* beneath the shade of plumes and banners—in the crushing ranks of hosts—in the hot strife of battle? Is it not for the sweetness which the soul imbibes at the thought of a high name among men—of the long line of future generations that shall come pilgrims to the tomb, and wreath laurels around the statue? He does not strike down his fellow-man with the reeking hand, and stride above smouldering cities, merely for the gratification which this work of destruction affords

him. No; perchance he will encounter scenes that will cause him even to turn his head and weep—but *Fame*—his happiness, his all, as he thinks, is linked with *Fame*—this is the pathway to its goal—and blood and slaughter and desolation strew its course; others have waded through these to gain its trophies, and so must he. His soul is restless and strong with its impulses—its yearnings must be satisfied—and, in his ignorance, he has chosen this.

“Wealth,” thinks another, “wealth will give me peace. Golden ingots piled around me—sparkling gems of priceless value—the sway of the vast influence that money gives—the control of thousands—of the property of others—the stores of precious merchandise; wealth will give me peace, and I will seek for that.”

And thus might we proceed with various courses of employment which men pursue, and trace the springs of action far back to this desire for good—this deep impulse of the soul for happiness—this secret aspiration after peace; all pursuits, at least, that contemplate in their results the attainment of something beyond the mere necessities of existence—that call man from the sowing and reaping of the grain, the dusky labors of the work-shop, the acquirement of the ele-

ments of education—to the bustling mart, the martial field, the cabinet, and the throne.

But, be our suggestions upon this point true or not, certain it is, that these are not, in themselves, the foundations of happiness! Many of them may contribute much toward it in our temporal state—but that which will enable us to pursue these things aright, and to bear with a proper spirit the various circumstances of life, is found in the hour of reflection or retirement, or inward or spiritual communion. When we listen to the earnest calls of religion and act habitually upon its principles, will we find an influence which will answer and satisfy all these yearnings of our nature. And we shall find these not in the halls of revelry and pride—not in the wild course of unhallowed ambition—not in the hurrying rush of busy life; but when we have come out from these—when our mantles are wrapped around us, and our spirits have bowed to hear—then shall we learn them, as it were, from “a still small voice,” that will breathe peace and joy and eternal life.

II. I would remark again upon the text, that we must not mistake great excitement or ostentatious devotion for true religion. How much, my hearers, how much, in different ages and

places of the world, have men looked to the outward, the showy, the ceremonial, as the true mode of religious worship and action! How have they tithed the mint, the anise and the cummin, forgetting judgment, mercy and faith—the weightier matters of the law! How have they lost sight of the fact, that religion dwells in the depths of the heart, and beams with an angel-radiance from the face of the poor man, and drops the widow's mite into the treasury, and hallows the humble cottage, and lingers amid the rude arches of the forest; when it is perhaps afar from the robe of learning, and the hypocritical righteousness of the rigid professor, and the golden donation of the rich, and the gorgeous tapestry of the temple, and the glittering ornaments of the altar! Like the still small voice on Horeb, it is not in the tumult and the show, but in the calm of devotion, visiting the lowly and the humble mind. Heard not in the long, loud prayer, nor in the ornate and eloquent discourse—but breathing through the broken language of the unlettered, and heard in the simple petition of the poor, bowed widow, who lifts her thanks by her scanty board, or kneels on the lowest step of the altar.

I wish to impress this idea upon you, that external show and loud professions, and the appear-

ance of sanctity, are not always manifestations of the spirit of religion; and although we live in an age of far better ideas upon this subject than those which existed in the times of relics and pilgrimages and dispensations, yet it is well for us to guard against the delusion of anything like the principles of those dark ages.

But I mentioned another topic under this head, viz., that we must not mistake great excitement for religion. I do not say that there is no religion in excitements, but I say that I fear many greatly mistake every religious excitement for the operation of pure religion. Religion, in my view of it, is a gradual work, and does not become deep-rooted in the soul and exercise supreme sway instantaneously. As to true excitement in religion, I would express my opinion in the language of an eloquent preacher of the day. "Every prayer," says he, "of a Christian at once perfectly rational and perfectly devoted—every prayer is an excitement; and every religious service, every sermon, is an excitement as great as he can well bear; and every day's toil of virtue, and contemplation of piety, is a great and glorious excitement." "Excitements in religion!" adds he—"Are they to be things occasional, and separated by the distance of years? Is a man to be excited about religion only in a certain month,

or in the winter; and when that month or that winter is past—yes, when all nature is bursting into life, and beauty, and songs of praise—is the religious feeling of the people to be declining into worse than wintry coldness and death?

“Let us have excitements in religion—but then let them be such as may be daily renewed, as never need to die away.” The excitements of the christian religion, says he—“if they be like those that appeared in the great Teacher, are to be deep, sober, strong and habitual. Such excitements may God ever grant us; not periodical, but perpetual; not transient, but enduring; not for times and seasons only, but for life; not for life only, but for eternity!”

I say, my hearers, these words express my opinion. I fear that many look for religion in that excitement which is not “deep, sober, strong, and habitual”—but which is periodical and violent, and the effects of which soon pass away. I repeat, that I do not say that religion is never found here—but I would bid those who are seeking for religion in violent, and what appear to me to be unnatural excitements, I bid them examine the matter, and see if this be not a mistaken search, when Religion, with “a still small voice,” is calling them, unheard amid the excitement. Remember Horeb. The wind, the

earthquake, and the flame passed by, but the Lord spake in "a still small voice." Look to it, and see if a careful improvement of the ordinary means which God has given—a steady advancement in religion—a gradual and pure change within—a proper and rational excitement—be not the right methods of securing the religious principle.

III. *Lastly.* I would remark that conscience is the "still small voice," which, either in tones of peace or of condemnation, speaks to men. It is, I say, a still small voice; but it utters close to the ear of the soul, and it is heard audibly and distinctly, above the suggestions of passion and false reasoning within, and all the tumult without. The still small voice of conscience!—how has it wrought agony in the bosoms of the guilty! How has it been felt, thrilling all the recesses of the soul with that which is far more terrible than the cold embrace of the fetter, or even the keen edge of the death-axe! How much more dreadful are its horrors than the gloomy frown of the dungeon, or the uplifted scaffold! How does it haunt the murderer, speaking so low and secretly, and yet felt above all the busy occupation and noisy pageantry that move around him! Is he in the wilderness?—his solitude is peopled with

awful memories—shadowy yet distinct—and dreadful forms, haunting him with fixed and hideous gaze! Is he in the city?—lo! it is a dark solitude around him. He sits down alone, as by a judgment-seat, with that voice, that still small voice, continually uttering condemnation in his ears. How vain the endeavor to choke and bury the burning evidences of his guilt which throng up within himself, by looking upon the gay, bright world without! The murmuring of the breeze is fearfully like the voice of the dead—the record of the deed is written in glittering lines upon every cloud, and a red and upreared hand beckons him from the crest of every wave! Oh! the tortures of a guilty conscience, though uttered all so secretly and small! Who that is guilty has not felt it? And if not guilty of what men call crime, who is not guilty of breaking that high law of God?—guilty of alienation from and neglect of Him? Whose conscience does not speak of this? And if he is thus guilty, does he not know, that to purify the deep principle and motive within, is to still that accusing voice and cause it to breathe peace and joy? Does he not know, that until he does this, he carries within him a hell he should greatly dread?

But we spoke not only of conscience as a con-

demning voice—it is also one of great consolation to the upright and trusting mind. Oh! sweet are the tones which it utters to the innocent! Like an angel-voice, it comes to them with the early light, and discourses through all the day, and bids farewell at night—nay, it speaks in all their dreams. What, comparatively, are the outward cares, the busy changes, the physical convulsions which occur, to him who possesses that inestimable treasure—a pure conscience? His soul is unharmed amid all the dangers of the universe. He passes unhurt amid the lion's den—unscathed through the fiery furnace. Oh! to stand when trials and afflictions are thickening around—when carking cares are blighting the beautiful flowers of existence, and clouds are veiling the pleasant sun—to be able to stand and look up to God, with a consciousness of love to and harmony with Him, and to look within and find all right there—to behold the whirlwind and the earthquake and the flame sweep by, and yet, unharmed, to hear the words of the Lord in the still small voice—this is happiness, and peace, and heaven.

How kindly has religion spoken to souls like these, when all the world without was dark and perilous! And to the penitent, who has turned his straying feet and unlocked his obdu-

rate heart—who has stood appalled and terrified at the strong wind, and heard condemnation in the rumbling earthquake, and waited to see an eye of wrath in the glancing flame—how sweet, how solemn, how nealingly has come that still small voice of God—his Father—speaking to him in tones of mercy and forgiveness!

Strive, then, hearer, to cultivate a good, an approving conscience—strive, in other words, for religious life. You are then prepared for all the changes of existence, for the dark time of death, and the ranks of heaven. Cares may blight your hopes, sorrow may darken your day, disappointment may chequer your path; yea, the whirlwind may rend and break in pieces the solid mountain—the earthquake may convulse nature—flame may curtain the vast horizon, and thunders rock the mighty universe—but the still small voice will speak to you of peace, and joy, and heaven; and you shall stand trusting, and happy, and calm, amid it all.

DISCOURSE VIII.

PETER'S DENIAL.

LUKE xxii. 57.—And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

THE events which preceded the establishment of the Gospel were drawing to a close. The prayer and the agony of Gethsemane were past, and Jesus was deserted and alone. One had “followed him afar off”—one, too, who had emphatically declared, that even to the death he would acknowledge him. But the time of trial had come—the hour when persecution or death threatened him who should own the name or cling to the person of the despised Nazarene; and Peter, who had thus zealously avowed his determination to adhere to him, when charged with being one of his disciples, had, agreeably to the prediction of our Lord, “denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.”

Commissioned as the Savior was—occupying the position that he does in the economy of Redemption—far be it from us to make a comparison whereby we may lessen his authority in the minds of any, or speak too familiarly of him.

But, as "he was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin;" as he suffered and sympathized for and with us—we may not improperly conjecture the feelings which must have possessed his soul, as he looked around him, and beheld the darkness that gathered about his closing hour. The crown of thorns, the mockery, the buffeting and insult were before him. The iron hands of a rude and cruel soldiery were upon him. The cross waited for him, with its ignominy, its agony and death. But friendship, sympathy, might have brightened even these moments, and made the draught less bitter. Good men, who have walked to the scaffold, and "lifted up untrembling hands amid the flame," have felt the keenness of their anguish blunted by the kind words of sympathy, and have heard low voices of affection encouraging them in their last hours, and bidding them even a triumphant farewell. But not one friend gathered around the meek and lowly Jesus! Of all that he had healed—of all those whose hearts he had made glad—not one came to cheer his lone and bitter hour of agony. The withered hands he had restored to strength were not stretched out for him. The sightless eyes that he had opened shed no tears for his great sorrow. The tuneless voices that he had made to sing uttered then no

lamentations. But his followers—his most intimate companions—they too had fled. Often as he had taught them upon the mountain-side and on the sea-shore—often as he had broken bread with them, and led their untutored minds on in the way of heavenly truth; they were not there in their Master's tribulation. And he, too—he who had so vehemently protested that, at all events, he would acknowledge and be with him—he, too, had denied him, and left him alone. “While Peter was uttering these asseverations,” says a recent writer, “his Master was suffering the greatest indignities. The cruel hands of those ruffians were raining blows upon him, accompanied by every species of insult. In the midst of this violence, his ear caught the sound of a familiar voice, pouring forth oaths and curses. It was Peter, the affectionate, forward, boastful Peter, who, in this violent manner, and in the presence of that brutal company, was denying all knowledge of Jesus. Judging from his recent professions, we should expect that, at the first blush of insult offered to his Master, he would have sprung forward and defended him at the hazard of his life.” “But” Jesus “was prepared for it. He knew the weakness of Peter. He uttered no exclamation of surprise, no reproach at his faithlessness.” “Had he been any other

than the perfectly magnanimous being that he was, he would naturally have contradicted the" . . . "falsehoods of Peter." "But so far was he above everything of this kind, so far above all selfishness and anger, that he merely turned and looked at Peter. Those eyes . . . were turned full, in all their awful clearness and serenity, upon the apostate disciple, and they dissolved his heart in the tears of an agonizing repentance."

Such were the peculiar circumstances with which the text is connected. We might profitably pause here, and contemplate the exhibition which they give us of the character of Christ. We might well have our hearts softened, and our affections moved, by the Savior's sufferings and sacrifice for us. We might wonder at the love, and meek obedience, and high and holy resolution, that triumphed over Roman ignominy and Jewish persecution; yea, that rendered him victorious, in the calm beauty and holiness of his character, even when his most intimate and zealous friends had deserted and denied him. Thus might we go from the judgment-hall and the cross, with our affections aroused, our devotion stirred, and our faith strengthened, by the memories and associations, that, with their blessed influences, ever linger there. But, strong and holy as they are, we do not intend, at this

time, to dwell particularly upon the circumstances connected with the text. We think that Peter's denial of his Master, which is the special subject before us, affords lessons that we may profitably ponder.

I. And without further introduction, we would remark, that it teaches us the uncertainty and deceitfulness of our best resolutions. We know that the announcement of his determination to follow our Lord even unto the death, was in Peter no studied outburst of affected zeal—no empty profession of hypocrisy. It was fervent and sincere. He loved his Master, and when Jesus spoke of the trials that were soon to gather around him, he exclaimed, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death." Peter, doubtless, felt this. But the Lord knew what was in man. He knew Peter, better than that disciple knew himself. He foresaw his apostasy. He had seen that Satan desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat; he told him that he had prayed for him, that his faith should not fail; and he enjoined upon him, when he was converted, to strengthen his brethren. In reply to this Peter made his protestation of devotion to his Master, and the Lord uttered the emphatic prediction—"I tell thee, Peter, the

cock shall not crow this day, before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me."

And yet Peter clung to Jesus when others appear to have fallen away. But trials that, probably, in his zeal he had not foreseen, sprung up in his way. Crowds of remorseless persecutors gathered around his Lord. The chief priests and the elders, the captains and the cruel soldiery came, and his strength began to fail. When they took Jesus and carried him to the high priest's house, we find the disciple following, it is true, but he follows afar off, and sits down among others around the fire in the hall. And now comes the trial which is to sweep away his confident resolution, and prove the truth of the Savior's prophecy. A maiden, looking earnestly at him, exclaims—"This man was also with him." Moved by fear of persecution or death, or from shame, or from some sudden impulse—the cause we will not pretend to declare; the principle is the same—Peter exclaims, in the language of the text, "Woman, I know him not." But the excuse of a sudden emotion, a hasty impulse, appears not to avail here—for, after a little while, another sees him, and says, "Thou also art of them." And Peter says, "Man, I am not." An hour is allowed him for reflection. An opportunity is given him

to own his Master yet. But the prediction of Jesus must be accomplished. For another, after that space of time, exclaims—"Of a truth this fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilean." Says Peter, "Man, I know not what thou sayest." And while he yet speaks, the cock crows.

And oh! as the Lord turned upon him that thrilling, rebuking look, and the memory of the prediction rushed at once upon him—"Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice"—how did that heart swell with penitent anguish—how gushed the tears from their fountains, scarce repressed before those stern faces around him, as he went out and wept bitterly! No word was uttered—no spoken rebuke was given by the sufferer whom even *he* had denied—but a look, a calm, mild, meaning look, was turned upon him, and it pierced his heart; and amid the many bitter thoughts that throbbed in his hour of repentance, perchance was the memory of his confident protestation, and the experience of the uncertainty and deceitfulness of human resolutions.

My friends, Peter is not the only individual of our race who has felt this uncertainty and deceitfulness. Nay, I will ask—who is there that has not felt it? Who is there that has not made

some good resolution, some purpose of amendment—struggled to keep it a little while—followed the duty afar off, like Peter; and then yielded to temptation? Happy the man who has formed good resolutions, and has ever adhered to them! We fear that such are few.

Now I would not weaken confidence in our own ability to mark out a certain course in our minds and adhere to it. That this is frequently done, I doubt not. There are many who have thus triumphed. There is a nobility, a greatness about him who carries out his object, that can never attach to the timid and vacillating man. There have been those who have taken a position and maintained it. They would have moved the world had you but given them the lever of Archimedes. Luther would go to the Diet of Worms in the face of all opposition, and to the Diet of Worms he went. Columbus, give him but the vessels, would cross an unknown sea in pursuit of a new world—and the means being furnished, he crossed. Napoleon would pass the bridge of Lodi, despite the volleying cannon—and in the flame and smoke he passed. These are the effects of firm resolutions—the springs and sinews of strong minds—the germs of mighty deeds. But it is true, that upon the point of moral and religious action men fail most in their

resolutions. We think we may say, that there is no man who has not failed upon this point. He has become fully aware that he is in the indulgence of some particular sin. He feels that that sin clogs up the fountains of spiritual life within him, and fetters the higher faculties of his nature, and he resolves that he will break from it—that he will crush and destroy it. He wrestles manfully with it. He wars against it, by reason and self-denial, by prayers and tears. But, anon, there comes some pleasant temptation—his feet sink into some alluring snare—and lo! that sin again is coiled around him—and he finds that he has cause, like Peter, to go out and weep bitterly.

But he must strive again. A warrior of the cross, he must battle against it with weapons that are “mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.” From the depths of his fall he should gather strength, and from the bitterness of repentance he should extract a healing medicine for his soul. Yea, like the disciple, penitent for his apostasy, his zeal for his Master should be redoubled—he should, when converted, strengthen others; and, in his sphere, he also may be a rock on which a church shall be built.

But we should learn humility from the fact which we are considering. We should learn

humility, and a deep distrustfulness of our best resolutions, and the need of grace, and watchfulness, and industry, and prayer. It ill becomes us to say, when we see others yielding to snares, and falling from the upright course—"I know I shall never yield to that temptation; I am strong there." For, despite all our boasted confidence—despite the panoply of stern virtue that we have girded around us; this may be the very point upon which we shall fail—the vulnerable spot through which the arrow of temptation shall reach us. And how will the bitterness of our remorse increase in pungency, as we reflect that this was the very point upon which we vaunted ourselves—concerning which we said, "I shall never fail." Think you that there have not been instances of this kind? There has been, perhaps, many a young man, the pride of his parents, the loved of his friends, brought up in respectability, under an enlightened, religious education. And, with all the impressions of deep moral culture upon him—with all the safeguards of respectability and honor—with all the high gifts of love and friendship—he has gone out into the great mart of life. A station of important trust has been confided to him. The respect and affection of his kindred, the confidence and esteem of his friends, have been the safeguards with

which he entered upon that trust—and who would think that he would yield to temptation? Year after year rolls by, and but name such a result and he would spurn you from him. But alas! alas! our weakness. Temptation, in a form that he had never dreamed of—with a power and influence that he had never felt before, assails him—coils itself about his heart—drains, one by one, the emotions of honor, or drugs them into a fatal sleep;—he yields—he falls—he is ruined!

Is not this the history of many a life? And what does it teach us? That we are liable to yield to temptation. And oh! how deeply liable in matters that pertain to our spiritual interests. Here how often do we grow cold—how often do we fall away—how often do we slide back; yea, and perhaps, like Peter, deny our Lord! We cannot, my hearers, we cannot watch too closely, or cultivate too much these subtle hearts of ours. It is only by the strong aid of religion—by the aid of those principles and powers that we receive at the feet of Christ, that we can hope to remain stable, and to triumph. As I have already said, I would not excite an unreasonable distrust of ourselves—I would not have any become timid, vacillating, and weak, because we are frail. But I would have each one humble, watchful, prayerful, strong. I would have each one beware

of a rash confidence—of a trust in the permanency of a good resolution, that will fail him, and add to his bitterness by the memory of that very confidence, so boastful, so vain. The humility which I would inculcate from the present consideration, is no weak feeling. It enables us better to discharge all the duties of life, because in its calm security we find a guard against all the assaults of temptation which we are prone to lack when we trust to a rash and headlong confidence in our own integrity. Like the anxious but wary traveller, who looks eagerly forward to the goal of his journey, yet cautiously ascertains that his path is clear from obstacles which may hinder and throw him back in his course; the Christian pilgrim, in the exercise of true humility, while his glances and his hopes are all heavenward, and his ardor urges him on, still looks low and carefully, and keeps a thought to the perils that encompass his feet, and is not so lifted up and so rash as to hurry boastfully forward without thought and without circumspection.

This, then, is one truth which we educe from the event recorded in the text. We learn to regard with a reasonable distrust our best resolutions—to feel that without watchfulness, prayer, striving, respectable as we may be—honorable and firm as are our motives—we may yield to

temptation, and fall. This, while it is a peculiar lesson for the Christian, is a precept for all men, and may be carried out in all the transactions and all the duties of life. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Let each one be wary, diligent, active, in looking to his thoughts and his motives.

II. Another lesson which we may learn from the text, although, perhaps, not legitimately deduced from it, yet, we think, not inappropriate, is that, taught by our own liability to yield to temptation, when others fall we should regard their failings in a charitable light—though we may censure their conduct, and punish them for their actions. I do not—you know I do not—intend by this remark to say that the full weight of retribution should not fall upon the transgressor. We must have regard in this to the general welfare—to vital principles, which it will not do to peril by the exercise of a weak and misjudging mercy. None but God can see the heart, and tell when the transgressor has truly reformed and is penitent indeed, and, therefore, punishment is not for him required. Man cannot do this; and when the violator of his country's laws comes before his tribunal and the law condemns him, a regard for the general welfare calls upon him to

pass sentence. For you will see that the law, properly, standing above the affections and interests of men, holds the scales of impartial justice, in which the acts of all must be weighed, without reference to the fact, so far as this act is concerned, whether the accused has been heretofore respectable or worthless—the question of guilt, *guilt* alone is concerned; and, when that guilt is ascertained, to say to one man—"I believe you are penitent—you have violated the law, but I think you are sorry and have reformed"—would be to say to him likewise who, to escape punishment, might assume the mask of hypocrisy,—“I believe *you* are innocent.” For, we say, the heart cannot be read, and the outward conduct is all that can be judged of. So, every man who might commit a guilty act has but to assume a penitent demeanor, and justice would equally call upon all to be discharged. This could not be; and so, however *real* the penitence and reformation of the offender may be, as that penitence and reformation cannot be certainly ascertained, in order that others may not escape he must be punished. Human frailty renders this necessary—the interests of community call for it. Having thus shown the grounds of punishment, and insisted that, in all general cases, it should be inflicted, the remarks that I shall proceed to make under

this head will be cleared, I hope, from all misconstruction.

We say, then, that we fear there is prevalent in community a disposition to load down with infamy, and to pursue with the bitterest feeling, the name of the man who falls from respectability and honor by yielding to temptation. You recollect the narrative, in the New Testament, of the woman taken in the commission of a crime—and how they all gathered around her, as if to triumph at her downfall, and to inflict the punishment. And you remember, too, the remark of our Lord—“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” Now we do not suppose that our Savior meant to say, that this sin did not deserve punishment, or that men, because they are sinful, should not inflict retribution on the one who commits an overt act of guilt—this, I say, we do not suppose was the point at which Jesus aimed. But there was an opportunity for a lesson even more important than that of punishment, and he took occasion to rebuke that bad spirit manifested, which seemed not to think so much of the precise guilt of the crime—not so much of the principle sacrificed or endangered—as it did of the triumph it enjoyed in beholding a fellow-creature fallen, while it stood innocent of this guilt, or, perhaps, only undetected; this bad

spirit, I say, that looked beyond the mere punishment of the offence, as a just retribution for a crime—a retribution that should reform the offender and be a warning to others—that looked beyond this, and seemed to gloat over the detected guilt, the marred and crushed beauty of a human soul. This spirit, my hearers, needs to be rebuked, whenever and wherever it may be manifested. And, I repeat, I fear that this disposition is prevalent in community at this day. We will take the same instance which we supposed under the first head—the young man who, you will recollect, notwithstanding his respectability, his education, his high principle of honor, his kindred and his friends, yielded to temptation and fell. Now, of those who cry aloud for his punishment, how many desire that punishment from a pure, unmixed sense of justice? How many sinister and wrong feelings blend with the words that announce his downfall? “Ah!” thinks one to himself, “that man, a few days ago, held his head above me—he would not notice me in the streets; but he has fallen now—he is much lower than I.” This man would not on any account give utterance to this sentiment; he will go forth to say that he “pities the man, but justice must be done;”—and yet, how unconsciously, but how surely, does this deeper, more bitter emotion of

his heart choke up his sense of justice, and poison that which otherwise would have been a fountain of sincere, *unaffected* pity!

Another, perhaps, has been injured by the fallen man;—and that old, burning revenge is the feeling gratified—not a sense of pure, unalloyed justice.

And so we might go on, analyzing the different motives which prompt men to be loud and eloquent whenever a fellow-creature falls from his elevation in society. Yet, perhaps, we should not get at all the causes of the vague feeling that takes possession of the public mind when such a fall occurs. We allude to the almost universal prejudice that possesses the minds of community towards one who is accused of a crime or a misdemeanor—especially if he has had heretofore no peculiar hold upon popular affection—is a stranger—is poor; or if from some cause he has become unpopular previous to this result. Now, I contend that a charitable feeling should always predominate, let that man be who he may. We should not suffer our prejudices or our passions to get the advantage of our better feelings, so far as to blind us to any palliating circumstance that may lie in his case. While moral feeling calls loudly for justice, we should not forget to pity, and to hold charity. And I ground this

remark upon the truth that we have already had under consideration, namely, our own liability to falter in our best resolutions, and to yield to temptation. Place yourselves in his situation. You have committed a misdemeanor—yea, perhaps, a crime. You go back, in thought, and trace all the circumstances that led to this act. You see the very hour when the first temptation knocked at the door of your heart. You witness your strivings, your labors, your prayers against it. But you yielded—and behold your downfall! You feel that the punishment that must come upon you is just. You could yield to it—you could bear its ignominy, bitter as it is to your soul—almost without a murmur. But you hope that if men condemn they will at least pity you. You look for this, and you see only hard, stern faces scowling or sneering upon you—bent in reproof, not such as weeping angels give, but like those who know no pity. And yet, these very men are not immaculate—these very men may need this pity that they refuse; they are frail and liable, like you. And oh! how bitter is your anguish—that you must bear your punishment, not only in its ignominy and its suffering, but unpitied, uncared for!

I would have the exercise of a gentle, a christian charity for the faults of others, more

prevalent and active. How crushing, how desolate must be his lot, who has not been guilty of a crime, but who, yielding to temptation, has committed some misdemeanor for which society is but too ready to hunt him down, and to shut him out from its sympathy! What are his thoughts? He has done that for which he is sorry—against which he powerfully struggled—he sincerely believes he has reformed. But such are the unbending and adamant rules of society, that he never can be re-admitted within the pale of respectability. He is poor—he has no influence. His hopes are blighted in the bud. His bright dreams have faded in darkness. Unhonored, unloved, he must live, and when he dies, no tear shall fall above him; and men will little heed, when they tread upon the green sod of the outcast's grave, the sorrow, the bitter penitence, the keen remorse, that rankled so long in the heart that moulders beneath.

My friends, there have been many thus slain by neglect, who, in their repentant state, might have lived happy and respected—there have been many driven into crime, whom a charitable word, a pitying tear, a soft hand, would have led back to be ornaments and benefactors of society.

No one will gather from this, that, because he has yielded to temptation, he is only to be pitied,

and is not guilty. He is guilty, and deep in his heart should he sorrow and repent. If not, if he still goes on to sin, and by his acts becomes callous in iniquity, he deserves punishment—he must look for retribution. But let us all, remembering our own frailties, look charitably upon the frailties of others. Consider how we have often denied our Lord; yet has he been merciful to us, and turned upon us a mild, reproving look, ready to forgive. Consider how often we have needed, how often we do need, mercy at the hands of our heavenly Father, and let us beware of withholding that mercy from others which we require, and which He kindly grants to us. Let the denial of Peter, teaching us the instability of our own good resolutions, also teach us, even while we condemn and punish, to pity others whose good resolutions have been swept away, and who have fallen into *woe* and ruin.

III. Finally, let us, from the text, learn always to acknowledge and cling to religion. Although we are not threatened with the persecutions that menaced Peter, or called upon to say whether we have been personally with Jesus, or not—still, we are often called upon to express decidedly our acknowledgment of and attachment to his gospel, or, in one sense, of Christ himself.

Now, perchance, there are those who would be ashamed, in some places, and under some circumstances, to have it known that they are Christians—are religious. Why, they would be laughed at, jeered, sneered at; and so they join in the laugh, saying to those who ask them, "I know him not." Now what a spirit is this!—and what a strange idea! Ashamed of religion? Ashamed to let it be known that you consider spiritual and eternal things above things earthly and temporal?—that you love to put by the vanities and cares of the world, and hold communion with God, the best Being in the universe? Ashamed to have it known that you act, as the prime rule of your conduct, upon the great law of love to God and love to man? Ashamed of this, which is your most honorable badge, and that shall shine immortal and fadeless when all these titles of empty vanity—when all these mockeries of rank and fashion, shall be abolished forever—shall have crumbled into dust? Ashamed of that in which apostles and martyrs have gloried, for which they fought, for which they died—to which they clung in their last moments, shouting "Victory!" Oh! is religion with you a matter so temporary, so worldly, so superficial, as that the fear of a laugh, the dread of a sneer, shall cause you to deny it? Far

more weak than Peter are you, hearer—am I—if we thus say of Jesus, “I know him not.” Let us ever acknowledge and cling to religion, wherever we may be. Let us not wear it ostentatiously, in a spirit of self-righteousness—but wear it openly, with the light of its own calm beauty around us; and vice shall turn away abashed from us, and the sneer will be checked, and the laugh perchance changed to the tear of penitence. Let no one deny Christ. If he is not a Christian, let him strive to become one. Let him become one this day, this hour; and let him follow his Master at all seasons. And not only in word, but in action and thought, let him ever acknowledge him—let him never deny him, or be ashamed of him.

“Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend,
On whom my hopes of heaven depend?
Oh, when I blush, be this my shame,
That I no more revere his name!

Ashamed of Jesus! sooner, far,
Let evening blush to own a star—
’Tis midnight with my soul, till he,
Bright Morning Star, bids darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus! yes, I may,
When I’ve no sin to wash away,
No ill to shun, no good to crave,
No guilt to mourn, no soul to save.

Till then—nor is my boasting vain—
Till then I boast a Savior slain—
And oh! may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me!"

Let these lines breathe the deep sentiment of all our hearts, my friends. And if we do turn aside—if we do ever deny Jesus—may God in mercy regard us and forgive us; may his Spirit gently lead us back; and may the blessed countenance of the Redeemer, turned full upon us, thrill us with sorrow, fill our hearts with throbs of penitence, and cause us so to repent as that we shall find true rest and peace in our souls! Amen!

DISCOURSE IX.

THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

PREACHED IN ROXBURY, AT THE ORDINATION OF REV. C. H. FAY.

2 TIMOTHY iv. 2.—Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

CALLED upon as we are at this time to participate in an interesting and solemn service—to join in those ceremonies which custom has sanctioned as the public assumption and recognition of the relation of pastor and people; our text will be deemed appropriate as the basis of a discourse adapted to the occasion. The circumstances under which it was originally penned are deeply affecting. It was written by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, in the bonds of a rigorous imprisonment, and in the face of a violent death. The last words of the great and good are always precious. Those who have labored, and fought, and sacrificed all their lives, for their fellow-men, when they come to lay down their burdens and bid the world farewell, in the precepts that drop from their dying lips will be sure to bequeath it a rich legacy of love and truth—rich, if in nothing else, as a testimony and example of how the righteous finish their course. And these,

according to a very general opinion, were the last words of Paul. And what an ardent devotion, what a triumphant faith do they manifest! They blend consistently with the whole tenor of his christian race, and lend beauty to its closing hours. With an unfaltering bravery, from the moment in which the scales fell from his eyes and he became a new man in Christ, Saul of Tarsus had wrought for the gospel. No threats could daunt him, no sufferings prevent. The maledictions of the kindred Jew, the sneers of the stranger Gentile, had no terror for him. He utters his convictions of the Living God, unawed by the imposing aspect of philosophy, or the splendor of heathen worship; and he lifts his fettered hands for Jesus in the presence of kings. Scourged, incarcerated, beaten with rods, stoned, and shipwrecked; perilled by sea and land, by countrymen and strangers, in city and in wilderness; "in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness;" he seems utterly to have stripped off and thrown aside self—his sympathies are wholly absorbed in his great work; and not the least chord was touched, affecting the cause of his Master, the interests of his gospel, that did not thrill to his heart.

And if we pause and contemplate him here, we shall find an irresistible testimony to the truth and vitality of our religion. The career of this man could not have been the dream of the enthusiast, or the hardihood of the impostor. Nought but the memory of a solemn reality—nought but a conviction that pressed upon his soul like a burn-

ing stamp—could have made the boasting, blood-thirsty Pharisee change his course, and labor and suffer thus. But this is not all. We are brought now to his closing hour. Here is the great trial of his faith. Surely the impostor, with no chance of release, with every consideration that could have urged him on withered at his feet, would not brave it out any longer, and rush upon the very barbs of death. Surely the enthusiast would expect some visible triumph to attend him—some bright glory to linger around his dying moments. Surely the traitor, when everything that could excite interest, or pamper pride, had vanished from his dungeon, would draw back and recant. Is it so with Paul? No!—aged, worn, and beaten with the storms of life—aching with wounds that had been branded upon him in his many conflicts; with a vision clear and unfaltering, he looks beyond the outward and the temporal—on and up he looks, exclaiming, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.” He knew in whose cause he had suffered these things, and said he, “Nevertheless, I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” Thus, with all these memories of affliction around him—with, perhaps, the jaw of the lion waiting for him in the amphitheatre, and the hand

of brutal cruelty at his very door; so loved he his religion—so convinced was he of its truth and efficacy—so anxious was he that it should be diffused among men, and go down through all their generations; that, from the depths of that Roman prison—in his farewell with his dearest earthly friend, he exclaims, “Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.”

This was christian faith—this was the effect of that gospel to aid in the support and propagation of which we have assembled here to-day. It has lived through ages. The apostle has long since gone to his rest. We know not the place of his tomb. But the matter of his labors we know—their substance is yet with us. Let us be thankful for it, and faithful to it!

Passing from the immediate circumstances of the text, we shall take for our theme, in this discourse, the *Pastoral Office*. In speaking of this, to which appertain duties both in and out of the pulpit, it is quite probable that, as a party interested, I may not judge and teach with that strict impartiality which the topic demands. I desire you, however, in any case, to supply in your own minds the essential omissions, and to forego the erroneous commissions. Neither will I profess to say all that can be said upon this subject. But in what I do say, may I have the guidance of conscience and of God; and may each one of us who has taken up the ministry of the Word, be led to improve in future practice what may now be defective in theory!

I. Without further introduction, let me remark, in the first place, that the pastoral office is a necessary and beneficial institution. There are those, my friends, who would abolish the priesthood as a distinct profession, and make all men teachers, as they may be moved to speak. The arguments brought in favor of this position are certainly ingenious and forcible, but we deem them founded, like many other ingenious and forcible arguments, in the errors of the system to which they are opposed, and not in any radical defect in the system itself. Now, I beseech you, do not look upon me as assuming the side of the question that I do from interest—as a matter of course. If the ordaining and setting apart of a distinct class, to be preachers of moral truth and pastors of different communities, be contrary to reason and to revelation—to our free institutions and to the religion of Jesus Christ—let us all know it, and unite our efforts to abolish it. Far be it from me to live upon the slavish grounds of custom and credulity in this matter. I know not that there is anything so peculiarly luxurious and desirable in the lot of the christian American minister, that a man should wish to live in that lot, if the priesthood is an excrescence on society. I suppose that there are other functions than this in which a man with a mind, and two hands, and a brave heart, can find support and competency. Let me not be accused, then, of selfish and partisan motives, when I say that I deem the priesthood a necessary and beneficial institution. To go into a formal discussion, at this time, of this subject, would be to fill up this whole discourse

with that which must occupy only a section of it. But to those who would abolish the clerical institution, I would say—grant that there *are* evils flowing from this institution; are they *necessary* evils—evils engendered as matters of course by the very nature of the institution? Are they evils that will and must proceed from this institution, under all modifications? And, once more—are these evils greater than those which would ensue, were this order totally abolished? The answers to these questions would probably furnish arguments rebutting the radical position.

What are some of the evils alleged? That salaried preaching is contrary to the gospel? A number of passages might be introduced, both by direct and inferential authority sustaining this institution. But time will not admit of their discussion. “The laborer,” says Christ, “is worthy of his hire.” “The laborer is worthy of his reward,” says Paul; and again—“Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” Now, whether this living and these rewards are of voluntary contributions of food and clothing, or of wages—whether they were indefinite and temporary, or permanent and settled contributions, the *principle* is the same; and if a regular salary is more convenient and adapted to circumstances than any other mode, in order that those who preach may live by the gospel, it is plainly allowed. In preaching the gospel gratuitously to one church, the apostle speaks as if he had virtually robbed another, because he took wages of the one upon which he had no direct claim, in

order that he might be sustained in preaching to the other, of which he might have lawfully demanded support. The precise mode in which the primitive minister received his hire is unimportant in the present case. The lawfulness of the principle is all we need seek; for many circumstances and requirements that affected the teachers and believers of the gospel in its early years, do not affect us, and much that was applicable to their day is not to ours. This may be said especially of methods and measures—principles are always the same.

Scripture, then, does not disapprove of the custom of salaried preaching, but, on the contrary, sustains it.

But, again, is it said, that salaried preaching induces many who intellectually are unqualified for the ministry, and who are morally unworthy to apply to it as an indolent means of support? If this is the case, and perhaps it frequently is so, is not this the abuse of a good principle? Is it not an error which may be guarded against by judicious preliminary measures? I believe that there is, to some extent, error in the matter of admission to the office of the christian ministry. I believe that candidates are frequently admitted with too little intellectual preparation into this great field; and I am afraid that there are some who enter from unworthy motives, and with too little of the sacred unction in their hearts. But to what does this admission lead? To the validity of the argument that would do away with all salaried preaching? No; but to the conviction that more strictness must be observed in the

ordaining of men to the ministry. Because there are some incapable or unworthy pastors, does this admission prove the validity of that argument that would do away with salaried preaching, and then throw open the doors for all to be teachers of religion, who may feel that they are moved to speak? Think you we should have no unworthy preachers then? Yea, we should see tenfold confusion let loose upon us—Ranters, and Hot-Gospellers, and Fifth-Monarchy men, millennium prophets and expounders of the Apocalypse; and the pulpit, instead of a peaceful altar for each sect, would become a platform on which men, seeking to build their Babel-theories, would speak each in a different tongue from the other.

But *is* the ministry a means of indolent livelihood and support? Not to the faithful pastor. Not to an Oberlin, seeking his flock among the mountains—not to a Fenelon, succoring the houseless and distressed—not to any minister who rightly discharges his duties, and labors for the great end of his office. It is to him a field of lofty husbandry—of earnest, vigorous toil; and to such, especially in this country, a salaried settlement is no sinecure.

But, once more, is it said that salaried preaching is hostile to independent thought in the pastor? This argument would apply better to an established religion of the state, than to any condition of the priesthood in this country. There, where so much is to be lost by dissent from the popular sect, free thought may be repressed, and hypocrisy nourished. But I am willing to acknowledge that even here, in this

land of Puritan ashes and Puritan prayers, there is that in the condition of a pastor that is unfavorable to free expression of opinion. Societies are capricious. From one pastor, or under certain circumstances, they will hear opinions which, in another pastor, or under other circumstances, they will not tolerate. In the latter case, the poor man, dependent upon his salary for his support, is cut off, with his family, to seek a situation elsewhere—if, in the earnestness of conviction, and under the pressure of duty, he has uttered a sentiment that crosses the hair-lines of opinion set in the minds of his hearers. Literally or virtually, too, we are all wedded to creeds, in some instances perhaps rightly enough—and the effect of this is, that, unless the preacher harmonizes in every chord with some one of the sects, perchance he may look for his salary where he can find it. He may preach Christ as he understands him, but his doctrine must be stretched, or clipped, to fit the Procrustes bed of the literal or virtual creed, or he must find support outside these ecclesiastical and partisan walls. In these respects, although we have no established sect, no union of church and state, salaried preaching, even in our free country, may be hostile to personal independence of opinion in the preacher. But I ask the objector to salaried preaching, if his issue, in this instance, is a full and fair one? I ask him if he must not go deeper than the establishment of salaries, to find the radical evil in the case? To the salary, to be sure, the preacher looks for support, and if this did not exist he would depend upon some-

thing else;—but it is not the salary that shifts and turns and pushes him off—it is not the salary that becomes offended at his teachings, and reproaches, and excommunicates. You must look for the causes of these things in the people who control the salary. It is jealousy of opinion, not the custom of salaries, that is thus hostile to personal independence of thought; and if you would make a radical reformation you must loosen the bonds that wed the popular mind to peculiar tenets and ideas. I do not say now that this can or ought to be done. I merely adduce it as a fact, to show how superficial is the argument against salaried preaching, on the ground that it is inimical to freedom of opinion in the pastor. This does not reach the mischief of the case. Abolish the salary, and what would you have? The same jealousy of opinion still; and the principle that would lead an association of men to withdraw their support from a teacher who harbors sentiments contrary to their own, would lead them to withdraw from hearing a teacher who, *unsalaried*, should teach doctrines opposed to theirs, and to flock around one who agrees with them. What would you gain, then, so far as independence of opinion is concerned? Would not popularity and the love of numbers throw as many fetters then over free thought, as the love of a salary does now? Will not the evil complained of exist as long as this jealousy of opinion shall exist? We object, then, to this argument against salaried preaching—because it does not reach the source of the evil, and if practically acted upon would not accomplish the

desired result. It appears to me that the evils complained of, so far as a salary is concerned, are another *abuse* of a good principle. I believe that these evils can be corrected without an abolition of the whole system of salaried preaching. And I believe, moreover, that a pastor truly independent, truly honest and zealous in his opinions, will never lack for hearers or support.

There are other objections which I might proceed to notice, were there time, founded upon remarkably expanded ideas of the knowledge and virtue of the age—upon the principle that every man should be a preacher, and that people who know as much as their pastors need not to be taught by them. Noticing only this last position, we would say, allowing it to be true, for the sake of argument, that all the people in this age do know as much as their pastors, and therefore need not to be taught by them—I conceive that it is the office of the preacher not merely to instruct, but to impress, and, by moral suasion, to enforce truths that are well known, until men shall not only know, but practise them.

But we will not linger further about this discussion. We deem that the objections brought against a salaried and established ministry are fallacious. We believe it a necessary and beneficial institution. The study that is required for a faithful preaching of the word, demands that the preacher should be set apart from the ordinary business and turmoil of life, into a more quiet sphere. The duties of pastorship—the visiting the sick, the comforting the afflicted, the praying with the living, the burying the dead—

all these require a special minister; and this minister, precluded, by this occupation of his time and his talents, from acquiring support through the ordinary means, must receive that support from a salary. This is the idea that I have of the priesthood. No peculiar, mystical order of functionaries—no select caste above other men—no more learned and no better, from extraneous circumstances, than others; but an order of social, sympathizing, sincere men—devoting themselves to labor and sacrifice for the intellectual and moral welfare of their fellows, and for the glory of God.

It may be thought that I have devoted too much time to this point, but we know that opinions which we have been combating have recently been broached among us. It is well for us, at a time like this, to be assured whether we are or are not upholding a slavish custom, and establishing an injurious and unauthorized institution. This appears to be a proper occasion to speak upon this matter. Let me say, in concluding this division of my subject, that we have seen that some of the objections made lie against the errors of this institution. The true pastor, so far as he has an influence, will beware of these errors. He will act from *principle*, in the discharge of his office—he will feel its sacredness and responsibility—he will feel that he is a man, and that he is but a man. Oh! he must love his office. Its labors, its toils, its conflicts must still be dear to him. He must wear outwardly no ephod-breastplate, garnished with precious stones, but he must wear one

within, even a loving heart—a heart warm for God and for humanity; and this he must carry unchanged and unsullied through every scene;—and let this precept, as though it came from those sacred lips, and from that old dungeon in Rome, ever sound heedfully in his ears—“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.”

II. Having thus shown the necessity and benefit of the pastoral office, and the love that the minister should bear for it, we proceed to speak of his duties in the pulpit.

What are the objects to be attained by the pulpit?—what are its duties? We must have something more definite here than the answer, that they are to watch over and extend the interests of morals and religion. This is true, but it is a vague truth, that needs definition and application. We say, then, that the pulpit should lawfully adapt itself to circumstances. The preacher should look to the real wants of his hearers, not to their imaginary and erroneous ones. Some, perhaps, want nothing but splendid declamation, and exciting, showy themes;—otherwise, to them, a preacher is dull, trite, and uninteresting. But the preacher on this account should not neglect the matter to study the manner of preaching—should not leave sound and important truths, because familiar, and wander out into something new and strange, because grand and philosophical. Others, again, cry out, “Give us the gospel”—and this is right,

rightly considered—but their view of the gospel is frequently quite a narrow one. In their idea, it only consists in quotations from Scripture, aptly strung together and ingeniously applied, without regard to their critical and real meaning, or to their contexts. But the preacher will not for this cause leave out of view the aids of reason and learning, the arguments from nature, and the helps of refinement and eloquence. The gospel does not consist alone in texts of Scripture—but it is found in all that teaches truth and wisdom;—in the voices of poetry and philosophy, in the records of experience, and in that elder Scripture graven on the eternal mountains, and transcribed in the heart. Some, again, may not want so much said about piety, and practical righteousness, and vital religion. But the preacher will not for this, neglect to enforce these earnestly and frequently, by all the strength and all the motives in his power. Some call such preaching orthodoxy, although it may come from the lips of an avowed opponent of orthodoxy, as that term is commonly applied; but, in my opinion, they give orthodoxy more than peculiarly belongs to it. If all vital religion belongs to orthodoxy, then let us all be orthodox—but if it flows, as we most assuredly believe it does, from other views, let us both preach it and practise it.

The preacher, then, in the pulpit, will labor for the real wants of his hearers. His work is not for fashion, for popularity, for prejudice—it is for God and for humanity; and what God commands, what humanity requires, *that* he will preach. His own conscience, his own

convictions are to decide in this matter, not the caprices of his hearers. Understand me. I hold to no such right for the preacher that he may force upon his auditors whatever he pleases to say, and they must sit and hear it all. No:—they build the house, they garnish it in an appropriate manner for public worship—they wish certain principles to be maintained there, that are hallowed to them by faith and by sacred memories. Neither do they go there to have their persons publicly held up to attack, their motives grossly impeached, their characters coarsely handled. And when it comes to this, they should speak—when any matter of dissatisfaction with the pastor arises, they should speak, and, if need be, prohibit. Independence on the part of a society is not compromised by independence on the part of the pastor. They may exist with harmony, certainly with as much, if not more, than under other circumstances. Let the preacher, then, speak as he thinks—speak as a man—speak for his duty, his whole duty, and abide the issue. Let him preach from knowledge—let him preach from the Bible—let him preach from the heart; adapting his teachings to the wants of his hearers.

But let me say, further, that the pulpit should act upon the spirit of the age. Obstacles may be placed in the way of its influence by this very spirit. This is an age of great physical action—of trade and traffic, and worldly enterprise. These pursuits are calculated to drown the spiritual energies of men, and to limit their faculties to visible and material objects—to

schemes of wealth and aggrandizement. The pulpit, then, must speak with a trumpet-voice that shall thrill through these animal passions and appetites, and arouse men to a sense of that which is truly estimable and lasting. And not only must the pulpit do this, but it must speak for *all* the duties of life—it must exhibit religion in its bearings upon every action and every thought. It must follow men wherever they go to mingle with the world, and perform that which may devolve upon them. It should preside in the marts of trade and commerce, and enter into the daily transactions of business. It should attend to the interests of education, and the diffusion of intelligence and mental culture; of course, not making these the sole objects of discourse, but giving influence to them, and showing their moral and religious bearings. Well has a recent writer said—"The pulpit must become more adaptive.....Christianity is not a set of hard and dry propositions, but a vital and diffusive spirit, which can mingle with the whole moral life, and sanctify it in every action. In these days, preaching must diversify its topics, and widen the field of its ministry. Instead of dogmas, it must take principles; principles it must apply to practice; and practice implies the whole character and conduct of man in all his relations, personal, domestic, and public. Abstractions and theories in religion do not touch the heart or reform the life." "Preaching," says he, "without losing elevation or spirituality, should assume more distinctness; meet the mechanic at his bench, the trader at his desk,

and all according to their several positions and obligations." "If it be said, that Christ's religion has accomplished little compared with what might have been expected, the defect has been, not in the spirit, but the forms with which it has been encumbered. The result of all is, that in this eternal attention to dogmatical distinctions, the intellect and heart of the minister are dwarfed, and the disciples are in the measure of their masters. While a few popular doctrines are continually reiterated, or points of dispute are urged with a zeal that is often another name for bigotry, all that is serious in man's moral nature is left untouched; a spurious excitement is mistaken for conversion, bodily impulses for sacred inspirations, and fierce denunciations of a different belief for holy ardor in the cause of Christ.... That a vast deal of popular preaching is dogmatical or polemical, will not be denied by any person who is in the habit of hearing or reading our modern sermons; and often under the guise of religious phraseology there is concealed a covert uncharitableness, which the advocate for Christ should blush to utter, which the disciples of Christ should weep to hear."

Concurring as I do, my friends, in the remarks just quoted, I proceed to remark, that the pulpit has ever been a powerful medium for the dissemination of moral and religious truth. Mingled as its ministrations have been with error—unworthily perverted as have been its opportunities and privileges; still, it has done much, much for the cause of God—much, much for the spiritual welfare of man. And now,

when every other element of human progress seems awake and active, shall the pulpit become weakened in its influences and superseded by some other agent? The press is busy—the secular tongue is busy;—shall the pulpit be idle?—shall it be narrow and abstracted in its teachings?—shall it not speak out to the spirit of the age?—shall it not speak for all the duties and all the true interests of man? We have not only error to meet in the christian camp, we have the infidel to contend with without. His weapons are, or rather he professes that they are, reason, science, learning. Shall we not meet reason with reason, and science with science, and learning with learning? And here let me say, that we should beware of falling into the error of looking upon every recent philosophical discovery—every new lesson learned from the book of nature—as an embodied influence, a newly-forged weapon for the overthrow of the gospel. It is to be hoped that the christian world generally is beginning to see that the Word of God wars not with his works—that every new revelation of nature but strengthens the chain which links earth and sky—adds to the battlements of that religion whose foundation is the eternal Rock, and whose pinnacle is bright with upper glories. I say, then, that we should have a well-taught and gifted pulpit; but in saying so, I do not mean (far from it!) that it is to utter only liquid declamation, and learned bombast, and refined speculations, and smooth prettiness, and choice polished sentences, as bright and as cold as icicles—neither that it should become entangled

with this world's wisdom, or wander into mystic subtleties, or have its spirituality and its beauty wither under insidious and fatal philosophies. But I *do* mean, that we should have an enlightened and an intelligent pulpit—a pulpit that shall be able to be, in the proper sense of the phrase, “all things to all men”—that shall be able to meet intellect with its own weapons, and to convince it in all the pride of its wisdom; and yet shall teach the little child—that shall show the haughty philosopher the unsearchable riches of Christ, and yet be understood and blessed by the poor and simple-minded. I *do* mean that we should have a pulpit that shall advance beyond the skeletons of creeds and the dry ground of doctrinal propositions, and probe the heart, and open to the thirsty lip and the fainting spirit the gushing waters of eternal life, and heal the spiritual woes, and satisfy the spiritual wants of man. I believe that all this will well consist, and consist the best and the most effectually, with an enlightened, well-taught clergy.

And let me say further, that the pulpit should labor for the improvement and salvation of the world. It should wall itself around with and base itself upon the Bible as a munition of rock. It should exhibit Christ to the world. Not the Christianity of the church—not the Christianity of the creed;—but Christ as he lived, Christ as he taught, Christ as he appeared in all his moral power and loveliness; apart from the systems and the tenets of men;—Christ as he spoke at Olivet—Christ as he prayed in Gethsemane—Christ as he wept at the grave of Lazarus—Christ as he

died upon the cross—Christ as he arose from the sepulchre. Here is enough to move the heart, to start the penitential tear, to call forth from the welling fountains of the spirit, gushings of love and tenderness. Oh! there is a boundless theme opened for the preacher in the character of Jesus. Here are topics for his discourses, examples for his imitation, and the noblest motives that can be brought to bear upon the universal mind.

Such are the pastor's duties in the pulpit. He takes his station there, as upon a watch-tower, to proclaim the circumstances and progress of the night, and to prepare men for a glorious morning. On his right hand and on his left stands this injunction in letters of living light—"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine."

III. We come to consider the pastoral office in its relation to parochial duties. And under this head I will specify but two conditions for the right discharge of these duties.

And the first is, *a sympathy in the minister's heart with his people*. If it were only to deepen his philosophy, the pastor is placed in one of the most prominent positions in life. He beholds humanity in all its phases—he sees, as it were, every soul with its mask off. He is called upon to enter the low hut of the poor, the saloons of the rich—to stand by the bed of the dying saint, and to hear the last gasp of the hardened prodigal—to meet affliction in its weeds kissing the cold

lips of the dead, to behold Rachel weeping for her children. He is called upon to check the moanings of despair, to guide inquiring doubt, and to turn the tearful eye of penitence to the light of promise—in short, to rejoice with the joyful and mourn with the sad : and, I repeat, if it went no further than to improve his philosophy, it would be a great education—a pastor's parochial career ; an education out of the volume of human life, blurred, and tear-dimmed, and torn. But it is for more than this that he is thus placed. It is to call out his love for his fellow-men—to mingle his heart with theirs—to draw forth all his devotion to God and his cause. The pastor *must* sympathize with his people. Shall they be cold, formal words, that gush from his lips and fall upon the mourner's heart ? Oh ! no ; he must feel for that mourner, he must mourn too ; or his consolation will drop like cold rain upon the drooping hopes that he would bind up and restore. Shall it be with a secret contempt, an inward loathing, that he enters the home of the poor ? No !—he must feel that here too are his brethren, he must let the kind words flow from a sincere soul—a soul that looks beneath the outward garb, down into the immortal spirit, and that recognises in these toiling and afflicted ones such as those for whom his Master loved to labor, and with whom, as in other days, he often takes up his abode.

Again ;—in the joyful circle, the minister should not be there like a gloomy statue of ice, cold, distant, unlovely—quenching the light of the eye that turns upon him, and sending the tide

of social gladness freezing back to the heart. Goodness, piety, may live with a social spirit and a pleasant smile—yea, often it does live with them when austerity and gloom are the cloak and the cowl of monkish hypocrisy. If the pastor is to *live* religion, he should let it be seen that it is a principle that goes out into all life, and tempers every action—that it is most attractive when enshrined in an habitually cheerful heart—as flowers and herbage, wet with penitential dews, are the most beautiful when the sunlight mantles them. Says that quaint and pithy writer, old Fuller, speaking of the faithful minister—“Especially he detesteth affected gravity, which is rather on men than in them, whereby some belie their register-book, antedate their age to seem far older than they are, and plait and set their brows in an affected sadness.” Without sacrificing any of that dignity which he should maintain—above all, without trifling with religion or religious things—the pastor may be habitually cheerful, and be glad whenever occasion calls.

Thus, in sorrow and in joy—in all the varied experience of life—the pastor must sympathize with his people. He must imitate his Master in his sympathy. He must visit them as a brother—he must attend them in all their seasons of good and evil, faithfully, zealously, lovingly.

As the other condition which we would specify as necessary to a right discharge of a pastor's parochial duties, we would mention, that *he must labor in all proper ways for the good of his flock*. Is there a physical, social, intellectual, or

moral evil in any of the families over which he is placed? He must strive and use his influence to have that evil removed. Is there poverty? He should see that that poverty is relieved. Is there intemperance? He should labor, in the sober moments of the inebriate, kindly and persuasively with him. Is there strife? He should pour the oil of gospel love in upon those troubled bosoms, that they may be at peace. Are there despondency, doubt, or repining at the lot of the board and the hearth? He should labor to check that spirit—he should endeavor to remove that distrust, by pointing out right views of God's character and his dispensations. Is there profanity, or vice, or a lack of religious veneration? He should speak firmly for his Master, rebuke, and exhort. Is there a want of spiritual life and progress among the members of his communion? He should preach the word plainly and fervently, not merely in the desk, but at every fitting season. Thus, and in every way for the good of his flock, for the glory of God, the pastor should strive and toil.

I am aware, my friends, that the parochial obligations of the minister open to him a wide field of action. But I have laid down two general principles for this department, that, reflected and acted upon, will produce all necessary results. Sympathy with his people will lead the pastor to their homes and their firesides—their sick-beds and their chambers of death and mourning—their social circles, their baptismal fonts, their marriage altars—to all the scenes of their joy and their sorrow; and a determination

to labor for their good will excite him to enlist in all good schemes for human melioration, in all advisable plans for intellectual and moral advancement. It will place him in the Sabbath-school and the benevolent society, in the cause of education, temperance, literature, morals. Foremost in these will he be—earnest and zealous—warring with mighty weapons against sin, yet merciful to the sinner—striking at vice with a battle-axe, yet wiping away with a gentle hand, the penitential tear;—loving to young and old, to rich and poor—loving, and kind, and true to all whom Providence has placed in his charge.

I have now spoken nearly all that I intend saying at this time on the Pastoral Office. I have dwelt more upon principles than upon details. Principles are eternal. They abide and give character through every change, and under all circumstances. Special acts are left for contingencies. Let the pastor possess a loving spirit, and he will feel that his field is the noblest of earth. Let him act for his high calling—let him act from the pulpit and in the parish—let him act from principle; and, with God's guidance and blessing, he shall, in all the minute details of his ministry, do well—he will “preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.”

BRETHREN OF THIS SOCIETY:—

This is a joyful and important occasion. The installation of a pastor over you is an event full of meaning for you—an event in which are the

seeds of much gladness or sorrow. As you shall bear yourselves—as he shall discharge his duties—so will the fruits of this connection be. But special charges to you and to him are in other hands. I leave them there. Yet suffer me, ere I close, to linger around this interesting subject. There is, in the true model of a parish, a social feeling and a unity that make it the centre of many dear ties and associations. There is nothing that so much draws men together as a harmony of opinion—a sympathy of belief—and in a religious society this is an influence that is likely long to exist. Accustomed to meet one another in the same house of worship, Sabbath after Sabbath, year after year, families become familiar with and attached to each other, and out of many, as it were, one great family is formed. A stranger enters this community, and all feel interested—an old, familiar face is taken away by death, and all miss it. The joys or the sorrows of one member thrill upon a chord that vibrates through the whole. And this is as it should be. I know of no tie that is so well calculated to make men feel their kindred—I know of no influence that is so efficient in developing the great principle of universal brotherhood—as religion—the religion of Jesus Christ. It reaches into such vital elements of our existence—its soft hand rests so closely upon our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows—that the common principles of our humanity are revealed to us all; we cling the closer to one another, and the chain that binds us is electric. What more beautiful and holy in its associations and memories, than some old,

beloved parish? There stands the quiet church that for years has heard the sacred lesson, the gushing anthem, and the fervent prayer. There, when the bright Sabbath comes, and falls like an atmosphere from heaven on the green hills and the valleys, go up the groups to worship. The aged are there, who remember when the walls of that house were reared and its beams laid with rejoicings. The young are there, who have already learned to love its sacred courts. The dead sleep by it, under the tall trees, peacefully in their graves—the dead, who have laid their ashes beside the spot where the teachings that they once loved may murmur above them yet. There, by that altar, little babes have had their baptism. There, in those seats, their young eyes have rested on the words of Jesus. There too, perhaps, as they have grown up to reason and reflect, they have stood and made their holy vows of christian faith. And there, in yonder porch, perchance, the last light of earth has fallen on their sleeping brows, as the funeral dirge wailed over them.

All these influences have knit this group of worshippers together, and made their lot in life, in some sense, one. They have gone out into the labors of existence, to know and to love each other better—they have learned to sympathize with and to aid each other; and when, from their several places of toil—from the light or the shadow of their various conditions—they come together; when the utensils of the week are laid aside on life's dusty highway, and they meet to talk of hope, and heaven, and Christ, and God,

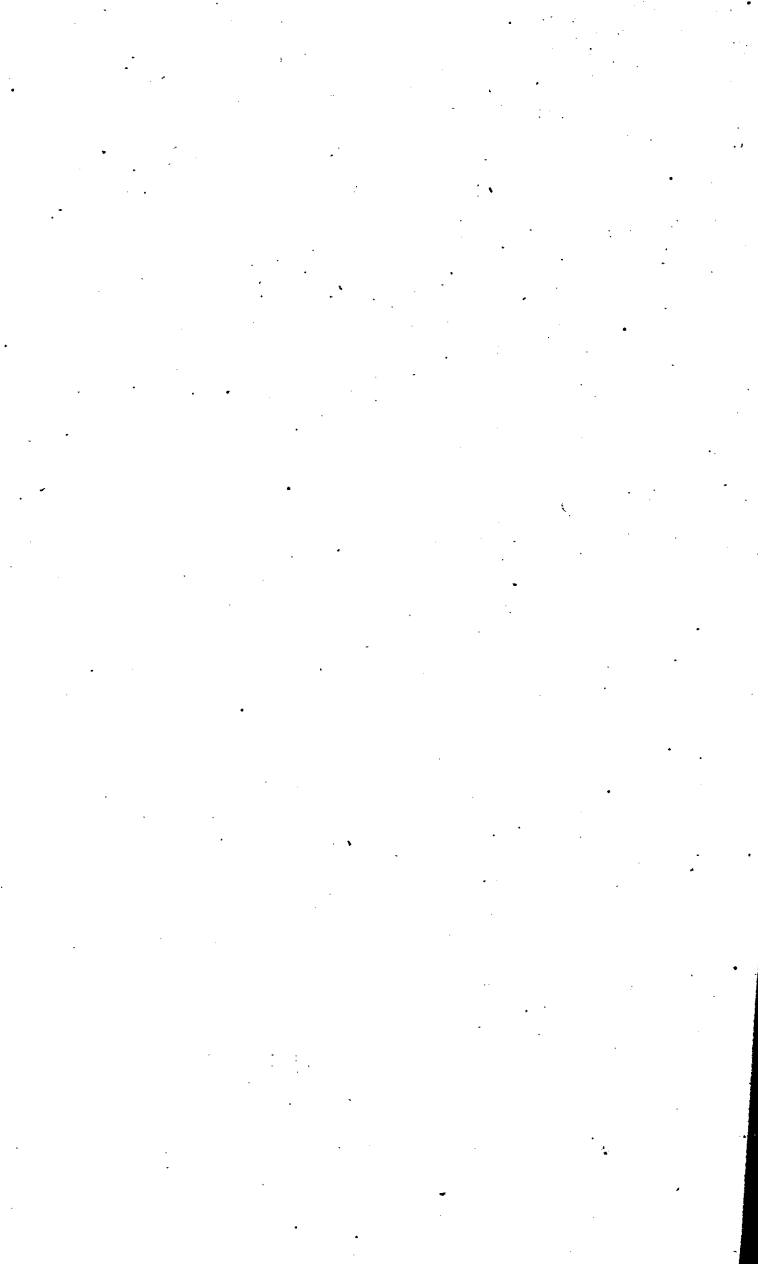
those mighty themes go down into hearts that beat for each other's weal, and mourn for each other's wo—that rejoice to trust that those pleasant meetings on earth are preludes to an endless one in heaven, where the old who have gone before, and the young who shall follow, will assemble, never more to be separated.

Conceive, then, what a momentous event to such a parish must be the installation of a pastor over them. Consider the intimate relations that will naturally grow up between these worshippers and him. What a complexion of good or evil may he give to that great family! How may he be the means of elevating or depressing their lives—how may he purify or pollute—how may he knit together or disjoin! How may he conduct them on in the path to heaven—or leave or lead them in the dark way of sin! What interests, then, may he affect, what great deeds of good or ill may he achieve! And if the result of his ministry shall be ill, how much of the responsibility in that case may rest upon his people! If good, how much may be the effect of their harmonious and loving co-operation with their pastor!

My brethren,—this is the nature of the event in which we participate this day, although these may not be, in every minute detail, your circumstances and condition. May your union be a happy one and blessed of God! May He sanctify it to your spiritual and everlasting welfare—to that of many—to his own glory!

And your pastor—may he be taught and blest of God! His—nay, *ours*, my ministering breth-

ren—is a high, a holy, an immensely responsible office. When we remember that we occupy the pulpit—the same field that Luther, and Knox, and Hooker, and Barrow, and Fenelon, and hosts of others, have occupied—yea, Paul the mighty, and Stephen the martyr—a field of infinite vastness—of almost overwhelming duties; it is a thrilling and a startling thought. How shall we discharge these duties? My brethren, with God's help and guidance. May we have these! May we labor faithfully in this field that "is whitening to the harvest!" May we gather many and immortal sheaves into His garner, and receive at last a crown whose lustre never fadeth! May this precept ever be treasured in our memories, and influence our hearts and actions—"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine!"



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